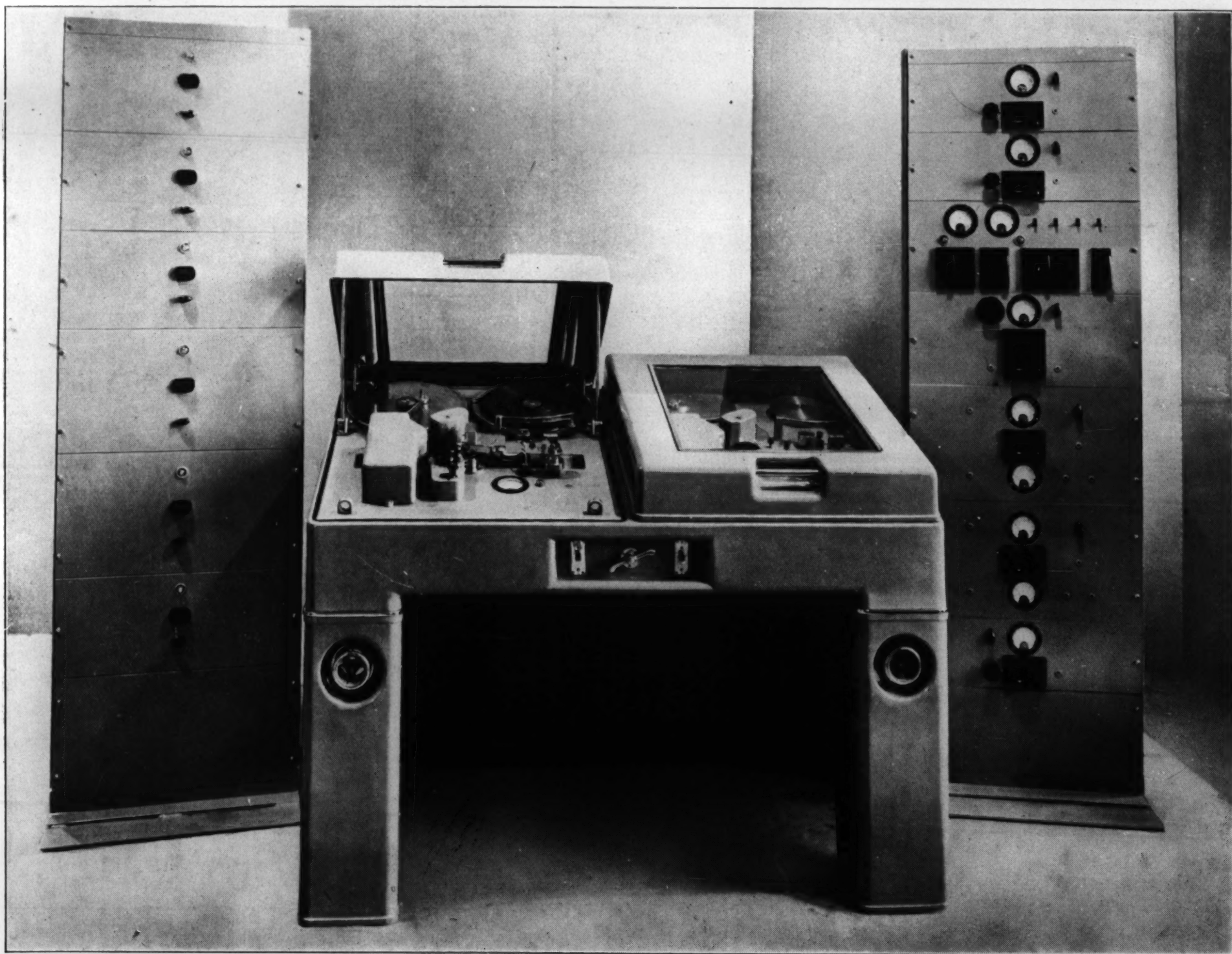


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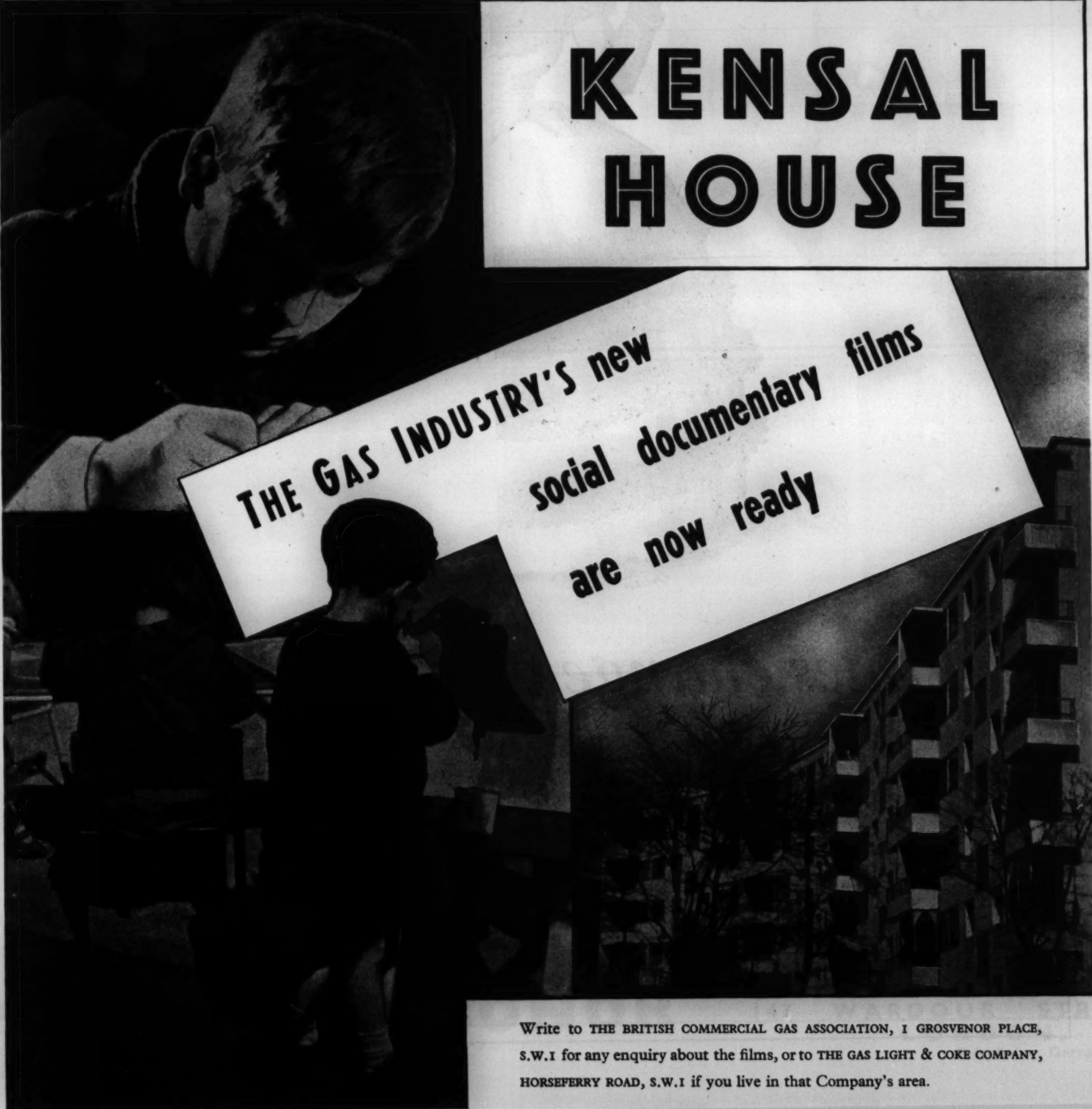
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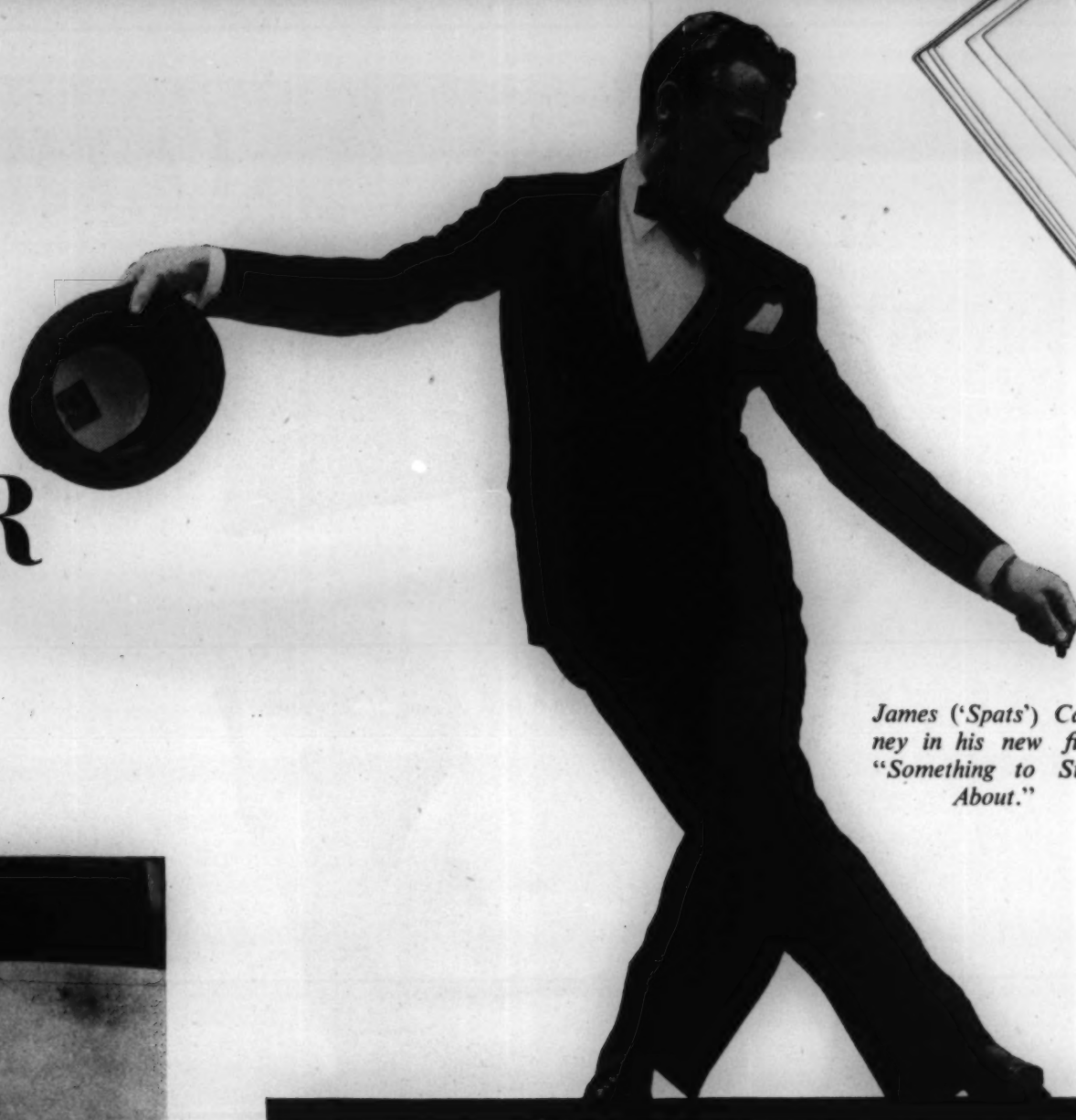


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LAMENT for the GANGSTER

by
Russell Ferguson



James ('Spats') Cagney in his new film "Something to Sing About."



Cagney in his first great gangster part, "Public Enemy." Picture from Gilbert Seldes' book "Movies for the Million," by permission of B. T. Batsford, Ltd.

THERE are no toughs left nowadays.

There was a time when one could tell a man's moral complexion by the colour of his horse. That was in the days of the primitives, when the good ones on white horses chased the bad ones on black horses, and the casting director could do most of his work in the stables without human interference. It was a good system, because it meant that one knew how to bet, even when the horses were a mile away.

When the movies came off the range, and the camera got close enough to have a good look at the faces, the bad ones became stars in their own right. It is not so many years since Wallace Beery, Fred Kohler, and a third (was it George Bancroft?) lay in the same hollow under the same tree. This was a great waste of badness. Such faces were too valuable to be chucked about in threes. Fred Kohler snarled and bullied his way to success and a big fan-mail, Wallace Beery shortly graduated with honours as Pancho Villa, George Bancroft uglified himself through the great sea story period, the great lumber-camp period, and the great newspaper-office period.

This was the triumph of evil. It was clear that the plug-uglies had what it takes, and they got their innings. They were tough, brave, and they always died unrepentant.



Paul Muni in the gangster classic, "Scarface."

Little pallid clerks like you and me like to be tough by proxy. When Wallace Beery got half his arm shot away in a gang-fight in an East-side theatre, and somebody asked him what had happened, he said "a bee stung me." There was a man.

Ugliness improves with age, and never goes out of fashion. Warner Oland terrified a long succession of leading ladies, remaining Warner Oland when they were all forgotten.

A certain Gustav von Seyffertitz or his brother Josef (they were indistinguishable) played the wicked Chancellor in what seemed like five or six hundred costume dramas, and nobody asked for anything better, though they had nothing to recommend them but ugliness and ill-will.

In the heyday of the bad men, when the crime wave hit the movies, there were not enough to go round. The old guard soared to

unheard-of heights of courage and defiance. New bad ones, Paul Muni, Edward G. Robinson, James Cagney, George Raft, Spencer Tracy, Jack La Rue, took the oath and started in as Public Enemy No. 1, Little Caesar, Scarface, etc. Those were the days when reputations were made. An actor got a chance to be glorious in defeat, and die with a curse in the limelight. Everybody likes Satan, anyway, because he's scared of nobody and he can take it. Paul Muni, George Raft and company took it week after week, and the more they took the more valiant they became.

Of course it was all a game. The films had about as much to do with the vice rackets as George Arliss with the Duke of Wellington. A real villain, living by the proceeds of a chain of brothels or by bullying small shopkeepers, is as romantic as a dog with sore eyes. A stage villain is not a villain at all, he is a hero in the wrong football jersey.

AND now, volte-face, change jerseys, we are in the middle of the great chest-shaving campaign. After a short probationary period as a G-man, James Cagney has become some kind of a dancing-master. Warner Oland is a detective. Edward G. Robinson (Little Caesar) passed through a hybrid stage as the policeman-criminal in *Bullets or Ballots*, and is now saying farewell to his tommy-gun in *The Last Gangster*.

Barton MacLane, the chief gangster who was the victim of Mr. Robinson's treachery, is now doing well as an attorney in *You Only Live Once*. The smaller gangsters have become policemen, the bigger ones are station superintendents. Soon everybody will be on the same side, kicking into an empty goal.

George Raft, formerly right hand man to Al Capone, takes office as lieutenant to Gary Cooper in a great-hearted effort to sweep slavery from the seven seas, and gives up his life for the woman he loves. Greater love hath no man than this. In his next film, perhaps he will be good enough to bring his violin.

Paul Muni (Scarface) goes in for science and social reform. He is now an old man with spectacles, most of the time. Jack La Rue and Humphrey Bogart are also on the side of the angels. Wallace Beery is reduced to domesticity and dipsomania. Clark Gable, a born tough, has had his nails pared for the part of the great lover. Spencer Tracy, that late flower of the gangster summer, is a taxi driver, against the bad ones. Those who reigned in hell now serve in heaven. All is lost, "the unconquerable will, and study of revenge, and courage never to submit or yield." Virtue, or at least the Hays office, wins the day.

Who is to take their place? Who will now be glorious in defeat? The losers nowadays are medical committees, bands of Red Indians, black men, nameless groups of gangsters. Paul Muni defeats the French medical profession, but a medical profession does not die with a snarl of defiance. A committee has no soul.

One tough, perhaps the toughest of all, has not yet degenerated into virtue. This is the unbreakable Captain Bligh, soon to be seen as Charles Laughton in *I, Claudius*. He is pretty well the last of them, and if he rats on us now, the game is up.

EDITORIAL

Home Rule for Britain

The American drive to obliterate every vestige of a native British film industry is succeeding admirably. Cynics are comparing the situation with the Italian conquest of Abyssinia, and there are indeed certain resemblances. The Americans with their impressive supply of Hollywood pictures, have the necessary tank power to put native exhibitors at their mercy. They are using it remorselessly. With their large financial powers, they have been able to set up their own American production units here. By giving all their orders for Quota films—not unnaturally—to their own units, they have turned the independent British producer into a humble applicant at their factory gate. This, too, they are doing remorselessly. Within the past six months, the native film industry has disappeared as snow before the Chinook. Like the Abyssinians, we have a few native bandits, roving around in the fastnesses of Welwyn and Elstree, but sovereignty rests with the conqueror. As Austin would say, he has "the power of the militia".

So far as films go, we are now a colonial people. We may hardly make or show films except by kind permission of our American masters and this is a fact which every producer and exhibitor in the country knows only too well. He may laugh off his subservience, as he completes the usual one-way deal with a member of the American renters' group, for, after all, beggars cannot be choosers. But he may not deny the subservience.

This is an interesting state of affairs, for we have had good reason to like and admire the Americans. They are inventive and able. They can write the English language into a cocked hat, and in fact have brought new power into English literature. Of all people, they are closest to ourselves in mind and spirit. But, to allow these cousins of ours to put a stranglehold on this fundamental power of national expression, which is the British cinema, is carrying blood-relationship a trifle too far. Lord Strabolgi talks of the 'gratuitous attacks' which are being made on these American film methods. Yet we wonder. Casting our eye around on the young Britishers who might have made the British films as great as any, we find that they are either working for the American, or not working at all. Casting our eye round the exhibitors, who might one day come to be proud of showing native pictures, we find them either in the control of the Americans, or facing the disaster of no supply. The American capacity for squeezing out has the long tradition of the gangster films behind it.

It may be a poor business this film industry of ours, but it is at least our own. There is just a little left of it: enough to make a few

independent spirited second-features: enough one might say, worth preserving and building into something better. Driven to the hills, these second features represent our last struggle in guerilla warfare. It is not surprising, therefore, that the Americans have announced their intention of destroying the second feature position. Our feeling is that in this case the American has gone too far. He has loosed a detestation of the alien in our midst, which, in the film world, has spread like wildfire during the past few months. For all the pretty discussions of the English Speaking Union, it will not soon die down.

Short Films and the Nation

Mr. Bruce Woolfe, head of Gaumont-British Instructional, has been campaigning for the better treatment of the short film in the new Cinematograph Act. The Government's recent proposals require that one in every twenty short films shall be British. Since short films occupy only a small part of the average programme, this proportion works out at fifteen seconds in every hundred minutes of running time. Mr. Bruce Woolfe protests, and behind him are all the British producers of documentary and short films.

Short films are treated with greater respect in Germany, Russia, and Italy. In Germany a film of cultural value carries with it freedom from entertainment tax. In Italy, the law makes it compulsory for one such film to be included in every programme. In democratic Britain, the Board of Trade concentrates more or less exclusively on the large commercial interests, whatever their source. It refuses these essentially British short films the same treatment as it allows to long films produced, directed and, as often as not, shot and acted by outsiders.

Perhaps it is not the Board of Trade's duty to consider national and cultural factors in presenting the new Cinematograph Act. But it is surely a duty of the Government as a whole. It is worth noting, therefore, that British short films have done much to describe the face of Britain and the Empire. They have trained a body of young directors and technicians. They have brought more international prestige to British production than the more costly ventures of the studios. They represent fifteen years of unselfish, often idealistic, effort on the part of just such men as Mr. Bruce Woolfe.

Mr. Bruce Woolfe only asks for equal treatment. It would be wise to grant it, and not merely in recognition of good work done. One shorts producer says that he has not minded the first ten years of intensive discouragement on the part of the Government, but that he is "damned if he will take another ten." The future of short films in Britain is evidently in danger.

World Film News

AND TELEVISION PROGRESS
(INCORPORATING CINEMA QUARTERLY)

Vol. 2 No. 8

November 1937

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A Greenhorn in the Wild West by Thomas Baird



Hopi Indian in Ceremonial War Bonnet

(Photo by the Author)

THE sun was shining when I awoke. A long pencil of light was slanting into the compartment through a slit in the blind. All day, the day before, the train had plodded its way through the dust of Kansas. At night we had been enveloped in a cloud of fine driving sand. The green of the wheat lands had disappeared behind the yellow curtain of sand and the blue of the sky had been blotted out as in a fog. I fell asleep in the dark. But the sun was shining when I awoke.

No one who in his more tender years read with avidity the tales of Buffalo Bill and General Custer, lapped up the romance of sunbaked Arizona from Zane Grey and became captivated by the glamour of the Red Man as he stalked through the pages of the *Boys' Own Paper*, who remembers the thrills of Broncho Billy and the early Westerns and who still ferrets out their kind in side-street cinemas—could maintain a steady heart-beat on waking up one morning in the home of it all, with a flash of the desert sun slashing the dim compartment of a train. Nor could I.

I pushed up the blind and looked out. The train was moving slowly uphill. Reddish brown sandhills rolled back from the railroad. Scrubby pinon pine and juniper dotted the landscape. Here and there sage bush, green but already tinged with purple, started out of the sand. By the railway line rode a man on horseback. A wide-brimmed hat shielded his face from the sun. He wore a bright magenta shirt and about his throat there was a black kerchief. He pulled his horse round, waved his hand in greeting, and rode at a canter into the eye of the sun. There are still cowboys in the West.

THERE are still Indians in the West. There are Navajos and Hopis, descendants of great and noble tribes who roamed the plains and hills of Arizona and New Mexico.

To-day they live in reservations. You can go and gaze at them without even paying. There are excursions arranged so that you can go and gaze. They live in *pueblos*, in *adobe* houses; they farm small patches of land. Their ancestors were nomadic hunters, following the buffalo on the prairies which the white man has reduced to dust. They live a peaceable life, citizens of no country. Their fathers were warlike because they resisted the invasion of the white man. Sold in treachery they are now a spectacle for the white tourist for whom they perform at regular intervals; those of them who have not succumbed to the white man's diseases of tuberculosis, measles and so on. The ancient ceremonies of the Red Man are now the tea-time entertainment of the tourist. Feathers and paint, which once struck terror to the heart of the pioneer, now dance mockingly to amuse the travelling schoolma'am. There are still Indians in the West but they are degraded in their captivity. They pay an annual toll of many deaths to civilisation; soon their ignominy will be ended. With them will die some noble domestic arts.

THERE is an art gallery in Santa Fe. Many of the pictures depict the surrounding country. There are warm-toned oils of sun-splashed *adobe* houses, with the shadows streaking down from the joists, the inevitable

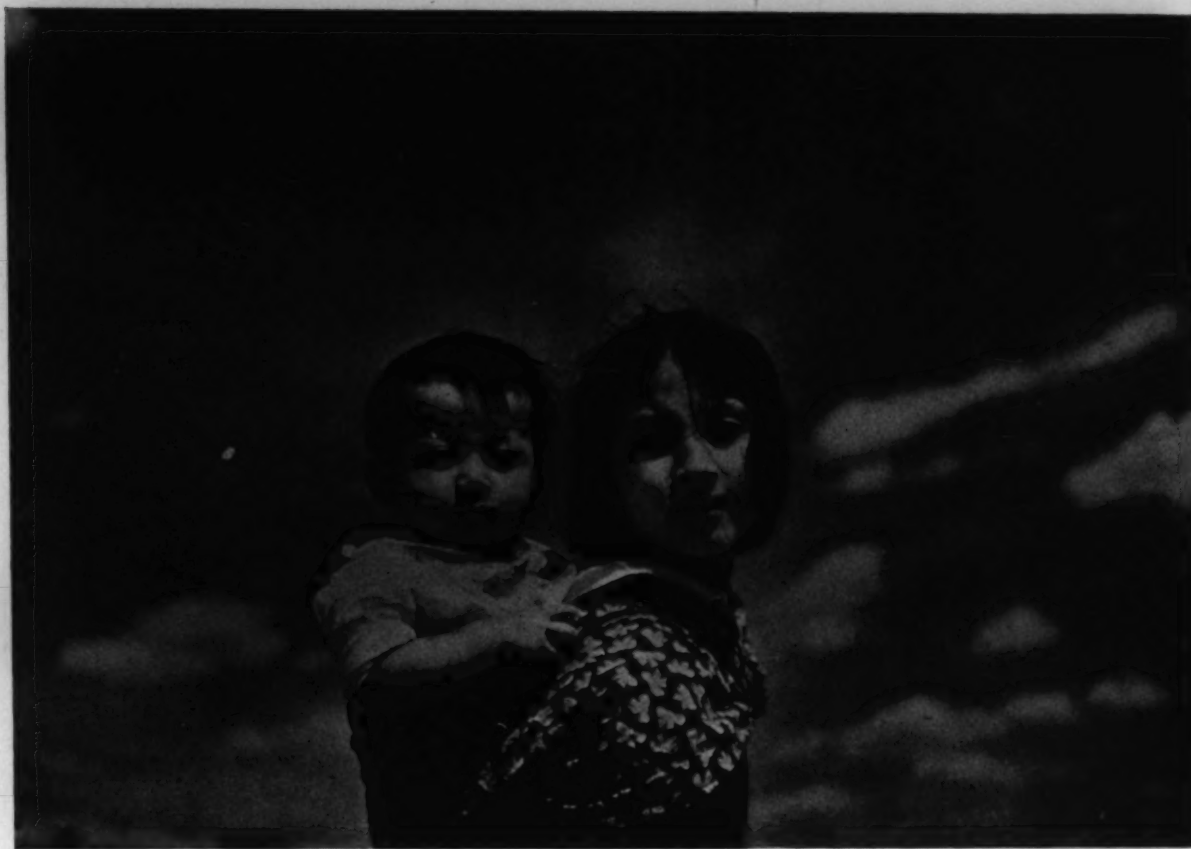
trail of red peppers hanging from the eaves and a tamarisk tree with its little pink flowers in the garden. Behind there rises a fantastically blue sky with unbelievably white clouds sailing across it. There are highly coloured groupings of aspen trees in all their yellow autumn glory. There are pictures of the desert in the haunting tones of early morning, in the blinding noon-day sun and in the mysterious nuances of evening. The gallery is a blaze of colour; quite fantastic but quite real. *Technicolour* could not with greater accuracy have transcribed the magic colour of the West as these artists have done. There is little need for an artist to imagine colour and there has been little imagination used. All the imaginative power has been reserved for another group. These are the portraits of the Indians. There are rows of realistic portraits, each of which might well have served as the cover design for the *B.O.P.* of a generation ago. There are lithe, semi-nude figures bending over lone fires in the desert, there are big heads of befeathered warriors in war paint, there are slim Indian maidens with single feathers who shield their eyes from the sunlight and peer into the distance. They are all beautiful, noble people, full of grace. These are works of imagination, for no one living has seen such Indians outside of a Wild West show.

BY the edge of the Grand Canyon there stood a ring of holiday makers. They were silent and expectant. From the door of an *adobe* house there issued half a dozen Indians in ceremonial dress. The leader wore a very grand feathered war bonnet but underneath his face was fat. The second in the string was a very old man; he might have been eighty. The others, two men and two women, were younger, rather fat and rather sad.

Slowly they processed around the ring for all to see. Taking up a place in the centre of the ring the chief announced in very good commercial English that he would sing the War Song of the Hopi Indians. Weird and wild whoops, accompanied by the stamping of feet and the tuck of a tom-tom flew over the heads of the audience and echoed down into the abyss of the Canyon. This was followed by a wild dance—the eagle dance, the victory dance of the Hopis. But the only victory today was the occasional nickel or quarter thrown condescendingly by the onlookers and deftly picked up by the eager Hopi children.

* * *

The older Indians do not like to be photographed. They are afraid of the evil eye. To take their likeness is to take virtue out of them. With their likeness in your possession you have the means of doing them harm. But the new generation is less superstitious. Another evil eye has fixed them. "Can I take your Picture?" "Ten Cents Please." Twenty-five cents will get most adults and a dollar will secure a full blown chief. Five dollars will give you the freedom of the *pueblo* except the sacred buildings. The *kiva* or religious house is tabu to a camera. No white man may enter and no *kiva* may be photographed even from the outside. In the *pueblos* where money does not mean very much you may still have



Navajo Children

(Photo by the Author)

your camera smashed for you. But there are few villages where a dollar does not mean several visits to the films.

ALBUQUERQUE is more modern than most small towns in the West. That is to say a stroll down the main street discovers several large stores, a few restaurants, well-dressed shop windows with a good display of wares. There are traffic signals at the crossings. There are at least three picture houses with modern cinema architecture. One of them is an Indian cinema. That is to say when the Indians decide to see a film they go to "The Mesa" and not to the more gaudy palaces on the other side of the street.

In the shady side of the street there are several cowboys. From under five-gallon hats they survey the posters advertising *Shall We Dance?* They rock backwards on red cuban heels as they contemplate a life-size cut-out of Ginger Rogers. Presently they make up their minds, fish into the pockets of red, yellow or green shirts and produce their 55 cents and pass inside. Just beyond the cinema I can see the plains of New Mexico and beyond that the hills of Arizona. Inside there is another glamour. The quid chewing, hard riding cowboy with the dust of Arizona on his boots, worships at the feet of Ginger Rogers; even as you and I. On the other side of the street a few Indians in dungarees move quietly along the side walk. They stop at "The Mesa". Quietly they eye the stills of *The Gay Desperado* which decorate the front of the house. From their pockets they produce their 15 cents and pass inside. A mile or two away is a *pueblo* where the Indians drag out a dreary existence, being looked at by inquisitive tourists. Inside the cinema they too can look at the West as the tourists do and thrill to the excitements which were once the daily life of their race. The noble Red Man, the Hunter,

the Warrior goes to the cinema for his excitements and thrills. Ironically he chooses the stories of the romantic West; even as you and I.

In the cinema rows of dark faces stare in silence at the screen. A pale-faced young man is making love to a blonde. The audience is unmoved. Suddenly the scene changes: a *posse* tears across the desert. Scattering the sand among the cactus plants, they whirl and swerve. The audience whoops and roars with delight. They applaud and stamp their feet. Then the pale-faced youth and his maiden and again silence. Horses again and more whoops. A bandit falls off his horse and there are screeches of delight. A sequence of wise-cracking brings silence again. As Leo Carrillo struggles with Chicago slang the audience is not amused. I laugh at a crack, but it is like gallows laughter in a cathedral. Soon Carrillo is infuriated by the muteness of a stubborn and comic Indian. The audience shrieks. Across the street the cowboys are lounging in the plush covered seats, nodding gently to the rhythms of Ginger Rogers and tapping out the time to Fred Astaire.

LATER on the edge of the town I pass two cowboys kicking their heels. The sun has set and the sky is like velvet. The air is warm. The tobacco smoke floats down the slight breeze. "Swell dame, uh?" says one. Walking along a sandy path into the desert is a little group of Indians. They move quietly but they are still laughing. Beyond are the Arizona hills and, between, the sand lies white in the moonlight. The Indians are soon lost to sight in the pinon and juniper but their laughter rings clear in the quiet.

Most of the tourists in the town went to see *The Plainsman*, to see the Indian in his glory and the pioneer wreathed in all his power, to see the life which has passed from the West.



THE sex-tormented Angelo leaves the nun, and I make my way to the stage-door of the Old Vic. It is half past nine when Mr. Emlyn Williams has half an hour rest during the playing of *Measure for Measure*.

In his grey gown, he is studying his part, his feet up on a chair, Angelo's auburn wig on the table.

"Please excuse my not getting up," said the young man with the greying hair. "This half-hour is almost my only rest during the day. Apart from *Measure for Measure* during the evenings and some afternoons, we are rehearsing *Richard III* mornings and afternoons including Sundays." The voice is low, musical, restrained, Welsh, and sometimes sounds like Robert Speaight's. The eyes are deep blue, the manner gentle, deprecating but reserved and watchful.

He offered me a drink but refused one for himself. "I never drink while acting." We talked of *Measure for Measure*. "Yes, it does remind you of Maugham's *Rain*, doesn't it? Human nature is fairly constant."

Then we got down to the subject of *Night Must Fall*. "I thought they filmed it extremely well," said the author. "Montgomery made an extraordinarily successful emergence from playboy parts, and his clothes were so right. I didn't want to play in the film myself. I'd been in the play too long and was getting a bit tired of it. I can't say to what extent Montgomery based his performance on mine. An actor never knows what his own performance looks like. Montgomery came round with Noel Coward to see me after the first night in New York. I found him and his wife most charming, unassuming and intelligent people.

"Van Druten's adaptation showed understanding of the play and of requirements of the film medium, and direction was able. The atmosphere of the wood came over with great effect. Fritz Lang, I agree, would have made a marvellous job of it, and so may Hitchcock, although he might have been a little too subtle and symbolical.

"Yes, the changed ending in the film does

"NIGHT MUST FALL"

Discussed by the

EMLYN WILLIAMS

Whose stage performance contrasted with the screen version of Robert Montgomery in the film version. Interview

weaken it. The attempt to satisfy propriety by giving the girl a nice young man to replace Dan is not only untrue to character and unconvincing, but fails to register on the mind. The young man simply doesn't 'come over'. I don't think that the changing of the ending implies that film audiences are of inferior intellects to those in the theatre. It was purely an error of judgment of the makers of the film. Why annoy the small, intelligent public who would go to the film because they had liked the play?

"Still I have no serious complaint. The job, as a whole, was well done. I'm not one of those who can admire either stage or film only at the expense of decrying the other. I've practised both mediums. Apart from my stage work, I adapted *The Case of the Frightened Lady* for the screen, acted in *Men of Tomorrow*, wrote and acted in *Friday the 13th*.

"I acted in *Evensong* with Evelyn Laye, *The Dictator*, and adapted and acted in *Broken Blossoms*. I adapted *I, Claudius*, and, by the way, there are rumours that Korda may soon continue with it.

"The film techniques of writing and acting are difficult in different ways from the stage techniques. More intensity and concentration are needed when the camera is turned on your face alone, and you have to convey an emotion by the flicker of an eyelid. And in film writing, there are camera angles and so many similar things to be remembered all at once. But I like scenario writing—so long," in significant measured tones, "as one has a free hand.

"I didn't do much stage work at Oxford," he continued. "It's rather strange. This is the first time I've played in Shakespeare since I took the part of the boy who carries the swords in the OUDS production at Christ

MUST FALL"

by the author,

N WILLIAMS

performance as Danny will be

screen characterisation by

in the currently released

review by Henry Adler

Church of *Love's Labour Lost*. And I've never seen *Richard III* acted!"

When I said that I had seen Peter Glenville play Richard in the OUDS production in Regent's Park, it became my turn to be interviewed. "How did Glenville do it! He seems to be too tall and good-looking for the part! Rather like Long John Silver was he? And how did William Devlin look in the part?" I pointed to the swarthy sinister Richard painted by Robertson in his costume design which stood in the corner. "Like that, eh? That's how I'd pictured him."

"When I left Oxford in 1927, I played Pepy's boy in J. B. Fagan's *And So To Bed* at the Savoy and the Globe, acted in my own play *Glamour* at the Court, and put on my play *A Murder Has Been Arranged*, with Margaretta Scott in one of her first West End parts. Then I acted in Sean O'Casey's play *The Silver Tassie*—a great play in some ways. Acting in it, it is difficult for me to judge, but I feel its presentation was bungled."

"I don't know why *Spring 1600* failed," he said in reply to my inquiry about his highly praised play of Elizabethan England. "But I'm rewriting it, and I hope that Gielgud will produce it again. I adapted *Christopher Bean* from the French, and wrote *Vessels Departing*, which might have had a West End run had it not been that Flora Robson, who played in it at the Embassy could not stay in the cast, and we could not think of anyone else capable of the part. Then there was *Night Must Fall*. That play, by the way, had no real link with the Jacoby case. The theme was almost entirely imaginative. *He Was Born Gay* was a disappointment, but the public was right: it was too much a mixture of farce and tragedy. I hope to write another play. No, I don't know what its theme will be."



"THE modern poetic drama derives a lot of its swiftness in production from the film," he said. "In fact, production generally has been speeded up by the influence of film technique plus, in Shakespeare, the enlightened conception of fluent playing of scenes, without long intervals, an advance popularised by William Poel, Granville Barker and, now, by Tyrone Guthrie at the Old Vic. The attempts at the spectacular and the general technique in such plays as *Cavalcade*, *Crest of the Wave*, and in such melodramas as *Wanted for Murder*, and similar efforts, show that the stage has been spurred to emulate its rival."

"There is a reciprocal influence. Films like *The Petrified Forest* reveal that the stage has goaded the screen to essay a higher intellectual level, has imposed on the camera the task of showing the excitement in thoughts instead of thugs and in emotions instead of machine guns. These films attempt to present characterisation and abstract issues—a great advance."

"I see no reason why Shakespeare should

not be filmed. I didn't see *Romeo and Juliet*, but I'm afraid I must be unpopular and say I liked *The Midsummer Night's Dream*. The apparition of the fairies was so well done. Cagney, of course, stole the picture. He's a grand actor. You know, if Montgomery hadn't played Dan in *Night Must Fall*, I should have chosen Cagney."

"British films? I think we're making great progress. And Korda has taken a step in the right direction by presenting a cup for the best film acting in an academy which teaches dramatic art. Stage experience is admittedly a good grounding for film work, but the latter's peculiar technique needs learning. I don't know which I should choose between stage and screen were I compelled. It's good to be at the Old Vic and to feel the reactions of human beings again after the cold eye of the camera. If I were hard put to it, I suppose I'd plump for the stage. But comparisons here are especially odious. Stage and screen—what are they but two facets of one thing—the Theatre!"

"Ten sixty six is the year we fix
 "For the battle of Hastings Hill,
 "When Harold was beaten by William
 the first,
 "That monarch of iron will."

THAT is history. I was taught it in school.
 I know.

Edward I, Edward II, Edward III, Edward
 IV, Edward V, Edward VI, Edward VII,
 Edward VIII.

Henry I, Henry II, Henry III, Henry IV,
 Henry V, Henry VI, Henry VII, Henry VIII.
 That is history too.

Stephen I. Unfortunately for history tables
 there are not many of him. But I know what
 happened:—

"For nineteen years through blood and
 tears

Men harried with fire and sword."

You cannot teach me history. I have learnt
 it. Blood, and battles, and sex life in the palace.
 Nobles and kings and queens. Because, you
 see, these are the only things which matter.
 Of course, some other things happened too.
 But nothing very much. There was a thing
 called the Renaissance. It is a little important
 because they invented gun-powder then, so
 that they could have better battles. Then
 there was Religion. That was a bit im-
 portant, because it made Charles I have his
 head cut off. And anything which happens to
 a king is history.

The British film producers (and those who
 were born in Central Europe) went to the
 same school as me. Anyway, we learned
 history from the same books.

Perhaps Mr. Wilcox did Queen Victoria's
 reign from my school-book. Anyway, he
 knows history too. She came to the throne at
 eighteen because she was a girl. There was a
 man called Melbourne. Of course, Mr. Wilcox
 knows he is not really history but *politics*,
 which one does not mention in good history
 books or films. Still he met the Queen.
 So one must say something about him.
 So one does not say much about what he
 did, but only what he said to the Queen,
 because that is history.

Then Queen Victoria met Albert. We can
 have four reels of that because this is sex in a
 palace and the most important kind of
 history. Of course, the sex was so refined, you
 hardly knew it was going on. But then sex
 in history doesn't really work like it does in
 you and me, unless it happens in Henry
 VIII—who is the exception which proves the
 Ruler.

While Victoria was having her four reels'
 worth of Albert, England went through the
 Industrial Revolution. There were Chartists.
 There was Faraday and Stephenson. There
 was the Great Exhibition. Gas, electricity,
 power looms, sulphuric acid, railways.

But these are not history because they did
 not run into Queen Victoria or Albert much.
 Cobden had something to do with Corn
 Laws. Queen Victoria had them altered
 and this stopped people being hungry. This
 bit is history.

All sorts of things were found out about
 medicine. Mr. Wilcox is content with Anna
 Neagle's Soothing Syrup.

The industrial revolution helped to make
 railways which were for Queen Victoria to



Home Life of James Watt—"The Boy who played with the Kettle"—

1066

**Let the Americans do what they will,
 avoid such subjects as the industrial
 and Watt, and keep to the old school**

ride in. Besides they made her coachman
 look funny. Coachmen are not history be-
 cause they are not well born. You can laugh
 at them, but not at history.

Some people think the Great Exhibition of
 1851 is very important. But it is not, because
 it is not history. All the same, Albert had a
 lot to do with it, which you might think made
 it history. But you are wrong. The Great
 Exhibition was about Industry, and not even
 a Prince can make industry into history.
 Albert was just a wee bit vulgar to be inter-

ested in it, though a Prince cannot be really
 vulgar.

Albert signed lots of papers. One must not
 know what they were, because that would be
 politics. He signed one paper, however, which
 stopped a war with America. War is history,
 so we can know about that one.

AMERICANS learn a different kind of history.
 They do not always know about kings and
 queens. (But then, what can you expect with
 people who speak differently from you and



and of George Stephenson, showing a commendable leisure-time diligence

THE YEAR WE FIX

says Arthur Elton. British film makers must
revolution, such figures as Stephenson
history books

me?) They heard of Pasteur. They made a film about him. They tried to explain what effects his discoveries had on ordinary people round about the place. But then Pasteur was a Frenchman, not like you and me, so he does not count. And then they have heard of Zola. Such bad form, and a socialist too. Still he was French so he does not count. Disraeli. Lloyds of London. Parnell. Then they make films, not about royalty but about the rise of their great industries and transport. No; the Americans do not know history.

TAKE a look at one or two people who are not history so that if you make a film you will know what it is not to be about. There is James Watt. He was a poor man who made mathematical instruments. He is not history except in one way. One point of history is to tell you things which did not happen. James Watt did not find steam by holding a spoon over the spout of a kettle. So this part of him always comes in history.

James Watt was born in Glasgow in 1736. He moved to London in 1755 to carry on his

trade as a maker of mathematical instruments. He had few friends and was terrified by the Press Gang. He used to hide away and make models. He had eight shillings a week and could not live on less "for fear of pinching his belly." So his health was bad afterwards. He married a girl who helped him all her life. Friends said he was "modest, timid, easily frightened by rubs and misgivings and too apt to despond."

In 1763 he was asked to repair a model steam engine. He did so and discovered a way of improving steam engines. This discovery helped to create a new civilisation.

James Watt founded (with Boulton) a great factory in Birmingham. He was the first great industrial capitalist.

He was usually gloomy. But in 1779 he wrote this letter:—

Hallelujah! Hallelujee!

We have concluded with Hawkesbury—£217 per annum—from Lady Day last, £275 5s. for time past, £117 our account.

We make them a present of 100 guineas. Peace and good fellowship on earth—Perrins and Evans to be dismissed—3 more engines wanted in Cornwall—Dudley repentant and amendant—

Yours rejoicing,
James Watt.

That tells you enough to avoid knowing about James Watt.

So that you make no mistake, take another example—George Stephenson. History says he invented the first railway engine in 1830, called *The Rocket*. He comes into history because he did not do this. He made the nineteenth engine called *The Blucher* in 1814. *The Rocket* was the forty-fifth engine and made in 1829.

Stephenson was poor, and messed about with steam pumping engines in coal mines. As a young man he was famous for his strength. When his wages were raised to 12s. a week, he said he was a made man for life. He had a sweetheart and they say he used to love to mend her shoes. He would carry them about in his pocket and look at them to remind him of his girl. He had a hard life. He began to get a reputation when he repaired a pumping engine.

In 1814 he built his first locomotive. In 1829 a great competition of locomotives was held. Everyone turned out to watch. Out of six or seven lumbering machines, Stephenson's *Rocket* won the day.

In 1830 the Liverpool and Manchester Railway was opened. A man called Huskisson went to speak to the Duke of Wellington. He was cut down by a locomotive, and the train which carried the wounded Huskisson to the city covered fifteen miles in twenty-five minutes. Stephenson did more than any other man to spread railways.

But, thank God, our English film men have taste and know history. Let the Americans do what they will. Never from an English studio shall we dirty our screens with Robert Stephenson, James Watt, the Industrial Revolution, Newton, Gainsborough (pretty bad taste, those London Film people making *Rembrandt*, still he was a dirty foreigner), Shakespeare, Gladstone. Thank God for British History Books.



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FIVE FACES

Dramatic story of the peoples of Malaya

CORNWALL (working title)

An experiment in dramatised travelogue

EASTERN VALLEY

An account of a group subsistence scheme in the valleys of Wales

A WRITER for whose work I have long had a great admiration—he is a man of culture and discernment—has just permitted himself a wail of agony. He has put into print what so many others of us have long known: namely, that, to quote his own words: "Above all things the Cinema needs authorship." And when he says 'Cinema,' he means chiefly the British Film Industry.

For many years, British films have been submerged in a slough of crass incompetence. This is not an opinion; it is a *fact*. There are now certain encouraging signs of improvement—the films produced by Mr. Victor Saville are perhaps the best example of what I mean—but there is still a long way to go. The old cry of the incompetent British film producer was that (a) America had unjustly scorned his product and (b) that he was not being given sufficient money to compete with Hollywood. Both statements were absolutely untrue. If British pictures had been good enough, they would have had an ample showing on American screens; whilst the millions that have been lost to investors through sheer squandermania by people who had no more right to handle this money than the average man-in-the-street, proves the falsity of the latter plaint.

No: what was wrong could be traced directly to general stupidity.

Many of the people lately in charge did not know the very elements of their business. They did not realise the patent fact, apparent to everyone else, that you cannot hope to make a good film unless you have a good story. And who provides the good stories? Why, competent authors. As the writer of the article I have in mind says: "When are we going to turn out something to stand beside *It Happened One Night* and *Lady for a Day*?" When, indeed!

Many sins are laid at Hollywood's door, but at least they know what they are about. American producers like Sam Goldwyn, Paramount, Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer and other companies have gone to work in the right way: they have engaged the best available authors in America and have paid them huge sums for their output. Apart from Mr. Korda and Mr. Saville (who, I believe, has not had a free hand until recently), what have the other British studios done?

Let me tell you: they have engaged authors—hacks, most of them—of no literary importance whatever (with a very few exceptions), and have expected them to produce work which could stand up to the literary craftsmanship of such writers as Sidney Howard, the famous American dramatist; Robert Riskin, that scenario-writer of genius, and a host of others. Is it any wonder, then, that in the past American films have been successes, whilst the average British effort earned nothing but contempt from sophisticated West End audiences?

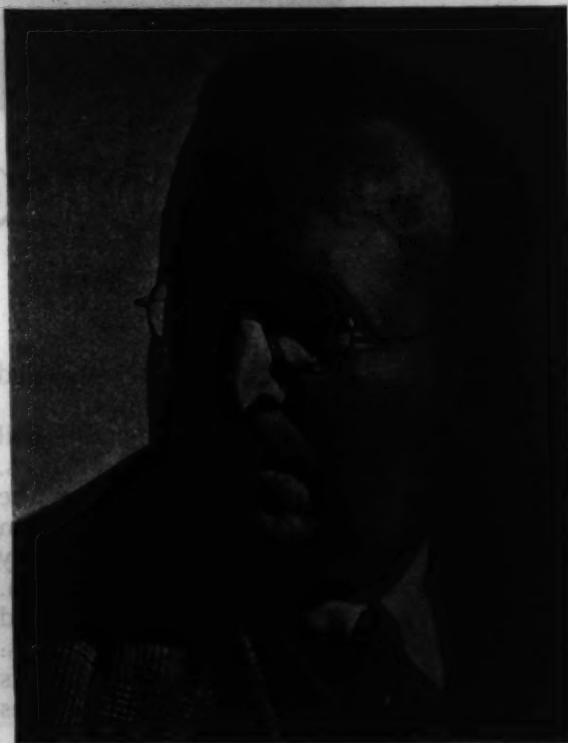
If some of the incredible things that have happened to British writers in native film studios were related in cold print, they would be passed over as the ravings of a maniac. The author I have quoted above says that he once wrote 70,000 words—from which ten words were actually used! He was lucky! Another author of my acquaintance was summoned to a conference, told that a story this company intended screening was not up

Where British Films Go Wrong

by Sydney Horler

to standard, and asked his price to re-write the scenario. He sat up for three days and three nights to do the job—and was later told that the whole of his work had been scrapped! Fortunately, he had been paid his money. A book of mine which was taken for the screen some years ago, was boiled down to one small situation, invented by me, whilst the rest of the film was a hotch-potch of inconsequent nonsense. I was grateful that the title of my novel was changed.

AND the tragic part is that we have in this country men quite capable of competing with the brilliant writers of Hollywood—and, in the case of essentially British stories, beating them. Why are they not employed?



[Howard Coster

Sydney Horler

Time and time again in the reviews of British films published in the technical papers, you find such phrases as "story trivial and unconvincing"; "The plot is a mass of incoherent details and forced situations," "whilst the direction is fair, the story is paltry and weak," etc., etc. The producers are condemned by their own trade journals.

So long as this slovenly and incompetent system prevails, so long will British films fail in their first essential: good entertainment. Far too many native films never stand a ghost of a chance because the authorship at the back of them is so palpably negligible. The Moguls of the British Film Industry in the past appeared to think that the author was merely a necessary nuisance. They have paid extrava-

gant prices to actors and directors and expected them to work wonders with a script which wasn't worth the paper on which it was typewritten.

Another grave fault has been starting the film before the scenario was put into workmanlike shape. I remember a year or so ago, lunching with a certain author in a West End hotel. He apologised as he sat down, saying, "We may be interrupted; I'm doing some work on a film scenario and I expect my collaborator along here at any minute." Sure enough, the said collaborator arrived—in a bath of perspiration, and clutching a few sheets of dirty typescript in his right hand. At some studio or other the film was at that moment being actually "shot." Amazing!

Is it any wonder that when the film in question was being shown to the public, it met with scant courtesy?

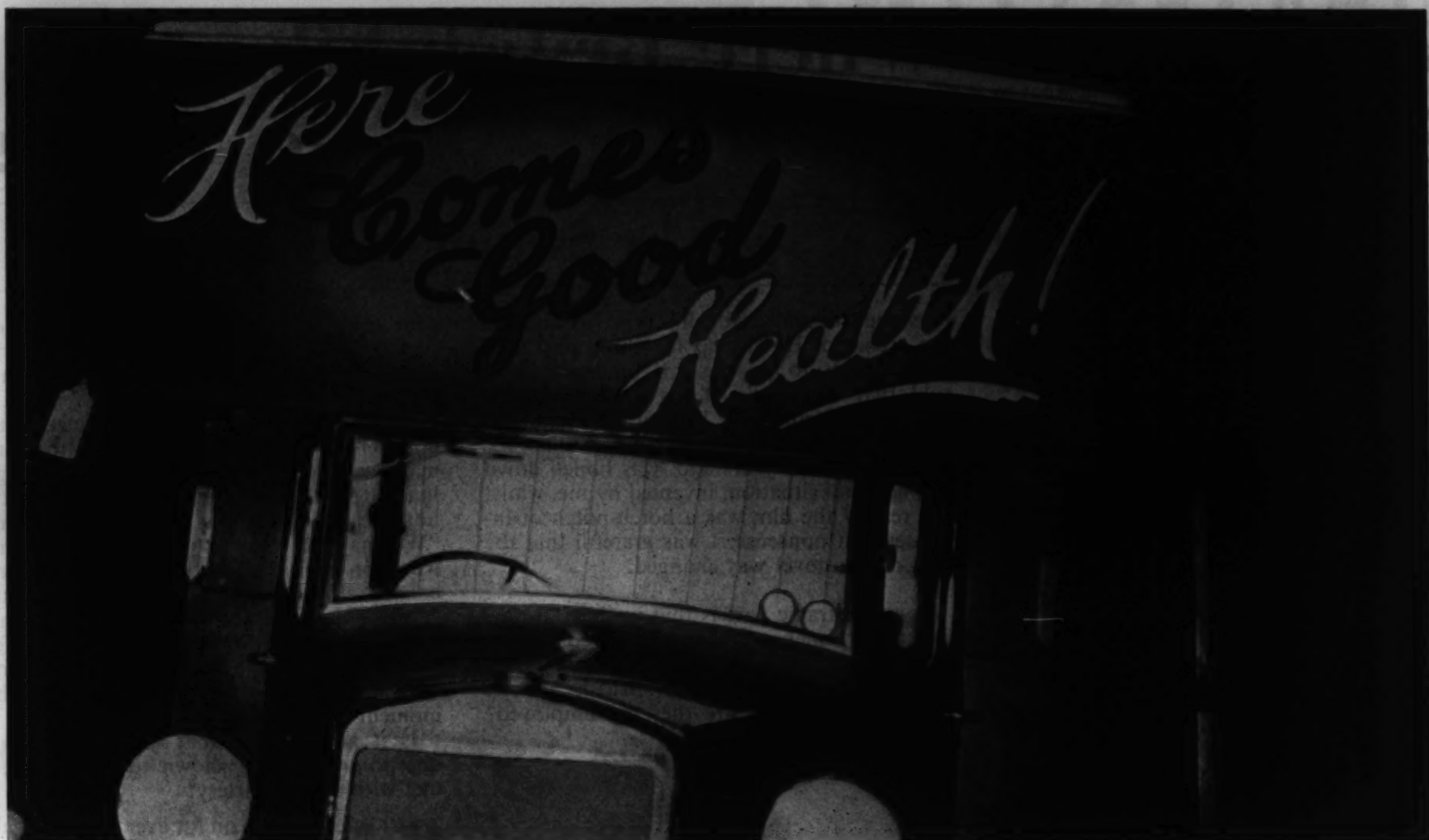
BUT one could go on for ever telling equally incredible stories. I myself have a vivid memory of being invited to a most palatial set of offices in the West End, and there ushered into the presence of a gentleman who coupled a Mussolini-like attitude with very questionable linen. He explained that he telephoned me for the express purpose of buying the film rights of certain of my novels. He talked in thousands of pounds with an airy grace; I dreamt of buying yachts and a castle in Spain (this was before the Civil War). But when I returned three days later to sign the contract, the gentleman had disappeared, and I never saw him again! I discovered later that he was an undischarged bankrupt, and that on the very day that he had been discussing thousands of pounds with me, he was trying to borrow a fiver from an actor friend. . . .

These—and many other examples of major lunacy—are some, not all of the reasons why the British Film Industry until quite recently was a by-word in the world of entertainment. All thanks and credit to Alexander Korda, Victor Saville, and others of their kind (alas! how few they still are!) for setting to work to bring about a highly-desired revolution.

Finally: it will not be until the British Film Industry has purged itself completely of the many undesirable characters who brought it so low in the past, that it will stand any reasonable chance of taking its rightful place as a legitimate world production-centre of this form of popular entertainment.

When it does so,—when it stands solidly and resolutely on its feet and issues a worthwhile challenge to Hollywood—then, and only then, will it have the common gumption to recognise that good stories, written by good authors, are the very backbone of screen successes.

Hollywood has proved it—and Hollywood knows!



BERMONDSEY'S FILMS DISCUSSED

by Dr. DONALD GREGG

Until such time as the central authorities awaken to the value of the film for educational purposes, the medical officer who desires to use films for propaganda work will have to make them for himself.

D. M. CONNAN, M.B., B.S., D.P.H.,
M.D.H. for Bermondsey, 1927.

And that is just what he did! In 1923, with no experience other than of still photography, with no professional assistance, with no successful models to guide him, the whole work was started from scratch. Aided by assistants from his Public Health Department in spare time and in odd hours, he prepared his theme, wrote his scenario, shot his material, edited his "rushes" on the cutting bench, composed and inserted his titles and captions (for these were silent-film days) and left only the processing and final assembly to a commercial firm.

The work was almost immediately successful and in 1924 he produced *Where There's Life There's Soap*—his first masterpiece which is still in use and highly popular in the borough. Technically it bears all the virtues of the "primitive"—it is simple in form, it is direct and sometimes brutal in statement, it never strays from the theme and allows itself no luxury of dwelling with self-conscious vanity on its many happy "shots." This film was designed primarily for use in schools for children of all ages and its construction is

worth noting. Dr. Connan first composed some verses on Soap, in snappy doggerel.

Children like this sort of thing and will gaily recite and sometimes sing the verses. A couplet or a verse is first thrown on the screen and then illustrated by a short film sequence. Then follows the next verse, usually a contrasting one, and again the illustration. And so on it goes through the whole soap and dirt epic, each episode short and vigorous. The film then closes with a series of shots demonstrating the special bathing facilities available in Bermondsey.

Dr. Connan has travelled far since these early days. Now he runs a film-unit, early spare-time assistants are full-time film producers, a studio exists in the yard behind the Town Hall for shooting interior scenes, and musical backgrounds and synchronised commentaries are prepared on discs to accompany the films. Fourteen films have earned their place in the library (1936) and about two films are added each year. Experiments with colour-films are now in progress and hundreds of feet of beautiful coloured stock are in the library ready to illustrate Bermondsey's growing amenities. Other films deal with Milk Supply, Food Supply and Kitchen Hygiene, Tuberculosis, Maternity and Child Welfare, Clothing, Germs, Fleas, Bugs, and Hopping.*

*For complete list see Catalogue of British Medical Films issued by British Film Institute, price 1/-.

His latest production is a full length feature film. It is modestly entitled *Some Activities of the Bermondsey Borough Council*. It is a straightforward statement of some of the many services and responsibilities that lie in the work of a modern metropolitan borough. Principally are noted the major works of Electric Supply, Water Supply, and Cleansing, the highly specialised service of Public Health with its chain of clinics and the humbler labours of those who repair (and alas! too often tear up) our roads and pavements. Nor is it forgotten that Bermondsey is a huge port with a two-mile frontage on the river, dealing with a large percentage of the nation's imports of meat and breakfast table food-stuffs. The borough owes to this wider family the duty of inspecting this supply.

A large part of the film deals with Bermondsey's Housing Problem and records some of the pathetic dwellings of its slum streets and courts and shows, more happily, the demolition and rebuilding which is the borough's present task. The younger generation is shown the difficulties of this work in the local scarcity and high cost of building sites, and this film may rouse them to solve, in their day of power, these twin obstacles of progress. Lastly among these severely practical works is shown the borough's new work of beautifying itself by trees and flowered parks, its famous tulip and dahlia display and its holiday home for nursing mothers and

Produced by
BERMONDSEY
BOROUGH COUNCIL'S
HEALTH PROPAGANDA
DEPARTMENT

under the direction of
MR. H. W. BUSH

Photography by
MR. C. F. LUMLEY

I'd wash if I'd been
born a fish
Or e'en a humble frog.
Alas! Alas! my habits are.
The habits of a hog.



Perhaps you never
knew before.
A policeman has a soul.



toddlers at Fairby Grange in Kent. These last sequences are done in colour. Here is a superb document of civic education and it cannot fail to arouse the youth of Bermondsey to a fuller sense of citizenship. The picture was prepared with a synchronised commentary but it is the highest tribute to the cinematic skill of this picture that it is generally run as a silent film.

Dr. Connan had this advantage in making his films—that he was catering for a very definite public. His films were made for the Bermondsey schools and streets. His message had to be simple, his words had to smash home. Humour, slapstick, the belly-laugh were all useful weapons, but these must reek of the city street. *The Tale of Two Titties*—the clean teat and the dirty teat—might disgust at a West End premiere, but it can bring mirth by the market stalls.

Countryside shots had their place too. For slum children there is endless delight and excitement in the cow, the pig, the ducks, and even that most superb of "box-office" beasts—the elephant—has been a "star" under Dr. Connan's direction.

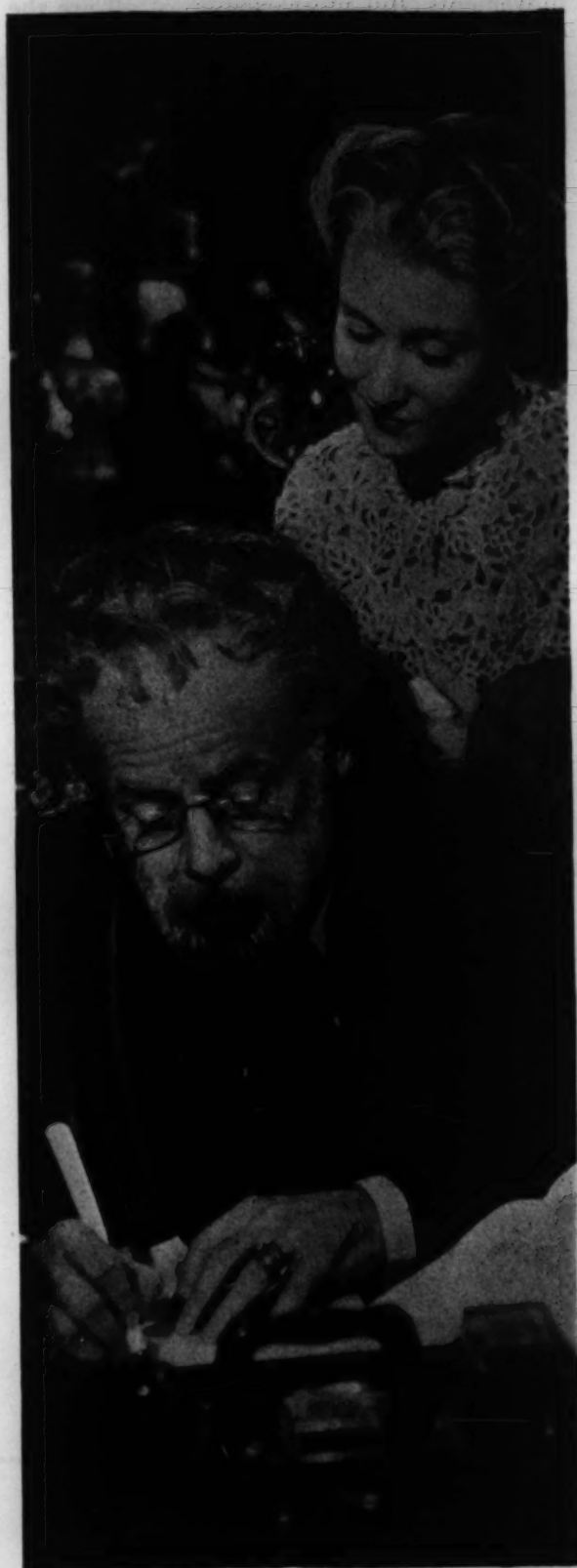
These films are now available in 35 mm. and 16 mm. non-flam stock and are in constant use. On four afternoons a week, one of the borough Medical Officers goes to a school, gives a short lecture, shows a few slides and ends his programme with one or two appro-

priate films shown by the Council's projector apparatus. In winter evenings the films are in constant demand for public meetings, social clubs, political societies, Scout and Guide movements. But most exciting of all are the exhibitions in the street. Throughout the borough are a number of power plugs on electric standards—usually in quieter streets where evening traffic is slight and crowds are readily gathered. On two evenings a week from April to October, just about sun-down, a red and yellow projector van with its slogan *Here Comes Good Health* rolls to its position. A loudspeaker crashes out its rousing music—Sousa-stuff that never fails to arrest and draw—an audience clots behind the van, two or three hundred strong in a few minutes, and the show is on! The "flicks" exercise their old spell, the crowd is hushed and attentive, children cease their play to gape, the busy citizens stop, the old men cock their ears to get the message.

It is not unimportant to add that Bermondsey's first projector van was home-made too on an old Ford chassis at a cost of some £200. Projector vans could not even be purchased in these days. Their latest van—a striking and processional affair—owes little to Big Business, for it was built locally to the Health Department's specification. And so it comes that it is "Health Week" all the year round in Bermondsey.



Alberto Cavalcanti praises



EUROPEAN producers should feel ashamed of themselves after seeing the second of the film biographies starring Paul Muni, for these films deal with subjects far more suited to production on this side of the Atlantic. Both deal with European subjects, but both are made worthily and with greatness by Hollywood.

No cost has been spared in making the later scenes in the film, such as the law court scenes during the Dreyfus case, in which there is a generous display of officers' uniforms, and some excellent period costuming of the women to add to its brilliance. The film has some unexpected and ingenious sequences, such as the one in which the

MUNI'S great performance in THE LIFE of EMILE ZOLA

crowd is covered by a sea of umbrellas shining in the rain, which comes when the ordinary crowd scenes and the shouts of "Down with Zola" threaten to become monotonous, and the pursuit of Zola in a hansom cab by the angry crowd. But these and other impressive features cannot conceal a lack of cohesion in the script itself.

Zola is seen first with his friend Cézanne in their poverty ridden Paris garret. Both are determined to destroy the lies and conventionalities of contemporary art and literature and to establish truth as the touchstone for their work. Then follows some weak dialogue and some unsatisfactory sequences showing the poverty of 1871, which never succeed in establishing the actual horrors of that year, with its stories of people driven by hunger to eat rats.

The first part of the film finishes by a clever little comedy showing a bourgeois couple hiding from each other the simultaneous purchase of Zola's 'Nana'. The success of his novels led to his becoming an established writer, and brought him considerable prosperity.

Success brings complacency, but the Dreyfus case plunges him again into the fight for truth and into a vortex of political controversy which at first threatens to destroy him.

The relation between the writer and the polemist is never very clear in the script in spite of the early passages about his search for truth. This relation would have been much less clear but for Muni's brilliant playing of Zola.

One of the best pieces of screen acting that I have ever seen is the casual reading at the newspaper office of the famous letter "J'accuse" in which Muni combines perfectly the writer with the polemist. It would have been easy for Muni to be tense and moving—like Laughton reciting Lincoln in *Ruggles of Red Gap* or the Bible in *Rembrandt*—but, instead, Muni reads it as if Zola were half trying its balance to himself, and half confiding it to his friend, not at all sure of its explosive effect.

I must confess that I like this better than the later speech in the 'Palais de Justice'. But by this time the steady march of the conflict over Dreyfus had taken us all in such a strong grip that critical examination is no longer possible. While many of us could not help throwing forward into our own day the effective exposure of the French

Army's dictatorial methods, many of the women in the audience were moved to tears by the playing of Dreyfus by Joseph Schildkraut.

Besides Joseph Schildkraut, H. O'Neill as Colonel Picard, Gale Sondergaard as Mme. Dreyfus and Gloria Holden as Mme. Zola are all first rate. Sokoloff, so much appreciated for his past work on the continent, is much less successful as Cézanne. His acting seems too subtle. He gives the impression of being a timid soul. In the scene in which he reproaches Zola for his complacent enjoyment of wealth and literary success, he lacks the necessary authority.

But what a hard test for any actor to stand beside Muni! Muni's is a truly beautiful performance. Handicapped to begin with by his slim figure he soon makes you forget this by his successful creation of Zola's heavy build as we have always imagined it.

And then, how tempting it must have been for a clever actor to use all the little tricks and gestures which the playing of this little Frenchman offered him. Instead, Muni plays with such restraint and discretion that it is impossible to praise him enough.

No doubt many critics will affirm that *The Life of Emile Zola* is essentially Paul Muni's film. I don't think so. Its main points are entirely outside the character of Zola, a fact which undoubtedly makes Muni's task more difficult and must make our praise of him even greater.

As a whole, I think *The Story of Louis Pasteur* was better constructed. Its comparative simplicity of style fitted the story and the characters, whereas Zola, a much more costly affair, with all the perfection of its direction, does not succeed in fitting the subject so adequately. In the case of *Pasteur* the producers did hit on a fitting style—perhaps by accident. In the case of Zola one feels that they have not brought to the screen the school of thought which Zola represented, and the vital part that his realist-school played in the evolution of art.

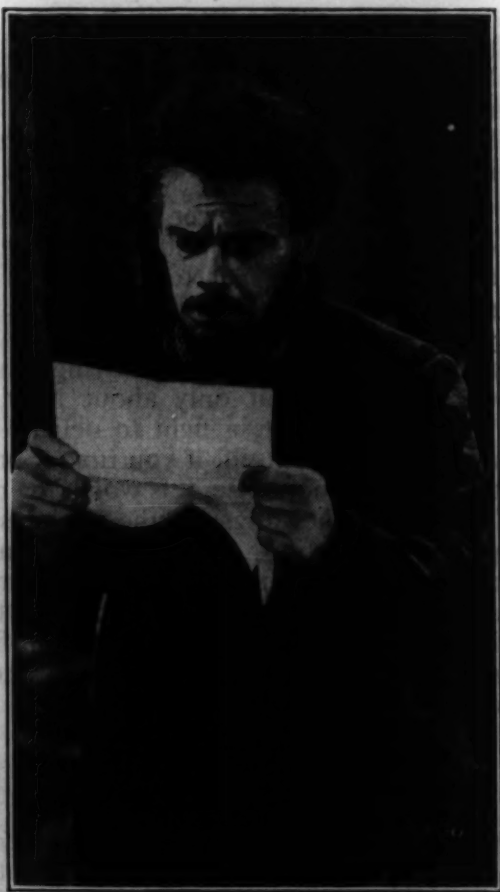
It is good to show the bourgeois couple buying 'Nana', and their hypocrisy in concealing the purchase. But behind this simple incident there was a hard and glorious fight. Behind this there were quite a few immortal pages in Zola's books. Behind this were the paintings of Cézanne. Behind this was a revolution that gave birth to a whole new world of art that I am afraid the cinema, still bound to sentimentalism and romanticism, has not yet discovered how to express.



The struggling author's meeting with Nana. Vladimir Sokoloff as Cézanne, Paul Muni as Zola, Erin O'Brien-Moore as Nana



Zola in middle-age: the prosperous author entertains Cézanne, the friend of less successful years



Zola reading of the great success of his novel, "Nana"



Indicted for criminal libel, Zola makes his final appeal to the jury

FIVE FILMS

by John Grierson

ZOLA, now at the Carlton, will almost certainly turn out to be one of the great films of the year. Other films like *Lost Horizon* have been as big in scale; but none has been more weighty in theme and sincere at heart. Like most people who work at cinema, I see too many films: respecting most of them for the labour and the ingenuity I know they contain and, in one way or another, learning from all; but it is seldom enough that a film bowls you over. *Zola* is one of the fine ones which begin as a film and end as an experience: like *Potemkin*, *Earth*, *Deserter*, *Aran*, *Pasteur* and, with all its faults, *The Good Earth*.

On the sweeping canvas of late nineteenth century France, Hollywood has staged in this life of *Zola* as dramatic a battle for truth as ever the cinema managed in fact or fiction. Most people will wonder how they came to be interested, but, considered as a form of expiation, there is good reason for its fire. No one would be more likely to appreciate the disintegration that goes on in the successful artist and the pains of the artist in the face of vested interests than the writers and directors of Hollywood.

The quality of the film derives from this feeling of secret autobiography and, of course, from Muni. As a piece of acting his account of the character of *Zola* is enormously skilled: jumping from age to age of the man; changing his gait, his speech, his idiosyncrasies, his mind: developing his literary character with such an uncanny sense of detail that, before we know it, we are facing a picture that so pleasantly reminds one of H. G. Wells that it cannot be far from the great *Zola* himself.

One sequence when *Zola* is a poor young man receiving his first fat cheque for *Nana*, is a most moving little patch of film acting, and heaven knows what with. Another, when *Zola* makes his defence of truth at the Dreyfus libel trial has the temerity to run eight hundred feet or so, or four times longer than the newsreels would allow our best political orators. Muni gets away with it. This I find queer enough. He has, at times, more annoying mannerisms than any actor I know, and this power of settling into the clothes of his character amounts almost to transubstantiation.

The principal theme of the story is not, as we have heard, the Dreyfus trial. Hollywood and its directors have taken deeper account of the writer himself: the progressive writer successful, finally complacent, shocked into the old fire by the political scandal which the Dreyfus case represented. Whatever the literary accuracy may be, it is a story that feels good all the way and in the great trial scene when judges act like curs and generals like jackals, it becomes, for a moment, majestic.

A curious point is that Cézanne has been made the driving force of *Zola's* life. He appears as a much lighter figure than the bearded tough of the portraits and a more romantic figure than the fierce old psalmist Cézanne actually was; but let it be registered as the most bewildering thing of the year. Hollywood has paid this tribute to the man who, more than anyone in the last half century, despised everything that Hollywood stands for.

As *Zola* is the goodness of Muni, *Knight Without Armour* is the anaemia of Marlene Dietrich; and it is the worst of big ambitious films that they magnify the central quality whatever it may be. *Knight Without Armour* is *comme ci comme ça* as they say in Wardour Street. It is said that Paramount has received the new Lubitsch film of Dietrich and, brilliant as it is, have to hold it up because of the slump in Dietrich's shares. After this and the *Garden of Allah* I would not wonder. In *Knight Without Armour* all that has been weak in Marlene—the tendency to pose, to become decorative, to make her femininity an end in itself, and, by complement, her increasing disrespect of every purpose but her own good looks—has brought her to the inevitable sticky end. I am sorry because Marlene, as anyone can see, has the material of great acting in her.

I am still sorrier for Feyder who made the film. Even under the handicap of an all-powerful Dietrich and, in Korda, a producer he did not understand, he has managed to convey the notion that he is, back of it all, a great director. See how he sets his atmosphere of Russian peasantry, how he manages the detail of his scenes, how superbly he manages a crowd, how colourful is the canvas of Russian revolution. Yet, however dominant are the distractions of Dietrich and brave the effort of Feyder, the picture is Donat's. He has the idiot role to play of a young Englishman who is required in the Russian troubles to commit every double-cross known to politics and every treachery known to common ethics and still be a hero. Somehow he contrives it and throws a dash of poetry in for good measure. As readers of this paper have found out, Donat is an uncommonly intelligent actor. Given the adverse circumstances of *Knight Without Armour*, he must now rate, in a quiet way, as a worker of miracles.

FLAHERTY, describing an actress who shall be nameless, is wont to say: "she *vends* herself." The description serves excellently for Dietrich and it is her tragedy. But, unless

The Life of Emile Zola

A Warner Brothers' film, directed by William Dieterle, with Paul Muni, Gloria Holden, Gale Sondergaard and Joseph Schildkraut.

Knight Without Armour

A London Films' production, directed by Jacques Feyder, with Robert Donat, Marlene Dietrich and John Clements.

World in Revolt

Distributed by Associated British.

her intelligent husband Odets tells her so, it is also likely to be the tragedy of our dear Luise Rainer. Dietrich conceives herself as an image that men worship, but Luise Rainer is getting the notion that she is the image that men worship crucified. That is how it appears in *Big City*. In *The Good Earth* she appeared as the tortured figure of womanhood, and behind her were the hundreds of millions of Chinese men and women and the poverty and the sweat of brows the world over. For a symbol, the tortured figure passed. Married to the hearty figure of Spencer Tracy in *Big City* there is nothing, unless the woman is daft, to be so tortured about. Yet the gestures persist and more so: the old *rerum lacrimae* dithering down the wrong face in the wrong circumstances. It may be innocent, but it is still blasphemy.

For this and a dozen other reasons *Big City* is big nonsense with everything either too sweetly happy or too sickly sad and a plot which gets baby births mixed up with gangster wars and tragic deportations and is not about family life in warring China or warring Spain but only about New York. There is, however, a fight to delight you in the last reel. By itself, if you time it properly and miss the nonsense, it is worth the money. To clear up the gangsters, the film presents in person, in action, and often in character, almost every well-known fight, wrestling and ju jitsu champion in America; as though Hollywood had heard my plea for fighters against actors any day and had decided to act on it.

ARTHUR DENT, chief of Associated British distribution, has suddenly and, it seems, personally, presented us with *The World in Revolt*. It is an encyclopaedic account of all the fighters in all the countries: each in a piece so that when you have finished China you know you have to go on to Cuba and when you have finished Cuba you have to go on to Spain and so on, I am sorry to say,

REVIEWED

by Basil Wright

Mr. Stringfellow says No

An Incorporated Talking Films' picture, directed by Randall Faye, with Neil Hamilton and Claude Dampier.

Big City

An M.G.M. film, directed by Frank Borzage, with Luise Rainer, Spencer Tracy and Eddie Quillan.

for an hour and more like Raleigh, another optimist, writing the History of the World. The intention is honourable, the material for the most part magnificent, but you will have gathered from your encyclopædias that they tend to be lacking in creative line and dramatic shape.

Apart from this pain induced in a professional producer of documentaries by the amateur efforts of my friend Dent, I find the film of absorbing interest.

The scale of the world's struggle comes through, even if none of the essential underlying causes are explained. The intensity comes through, even if the sadness of it is ignored. The universality of it comes through, even if no appreciation of its common economic causes is revealed. The only thing I complain of is that the picture of peaceful, beautiful, complacent and fat-headed Britain is exaggerated. We are not as beautiful, as peaceful, as complacent, nor as fat-headed as Arthur Dent tells us, and as a sophisticated warrior of Wardour Street, he is a conscious old liar in saying so. Like the great salesman he is, he is obviously selling something, and no one need have three guesses to know what it is.

I make an even more personal complaint. Seven years ago Dent used to say to the documentary people who tried to sell him their masterworks: "Cut it down old boy . . . cut it in half . . . I'll take two hundred feet for *Pathe Pictorial*." And we wound our æsthetic robes sadly about us and left the husky old Shakespearian actor to his groceries. Imagine our mild surprise when the maestro in this first belated documentary attempt turns up with six thousand feet. I feel like repeating meanly the old refrain. "Cut it down old boy . . . cut it in half . . . I'll take two hundred feet for *Pathe Pictorial*." But in fact see it for the greatest collection of historic film material that has been made in our time. Encyclopædic or no, it is unique.

IN the increasingly monotonous jumble sale represented by the cinemas of this country, with the standard articles, well-worn, sometimes tattered, and clearly priced at quarter the production cost, pinned up on every stall, just occasionally a lucky dip into a penny ragbag is rewarded with an unexpected joy. Such is *Mr. Stringfellow says No*, which, as far as I am concerned, crept unheralded into the cinemas, and slunk out again entirely unobserved.

The reason, perhaps, is that it tends to the satirical, and satire, from the great days of Raymond (*Hands Up*) Griffiths, has seldom been a box-office success. Can it be that in satire the movies approach too near to raw reality? Or is it that there is an unwanted compulsion of thought arising from the director placing his tongue firmly in his cheek and keeping it there? "Orthodoxy," as Bishop Warburton remarked, "is my doxy: Heterodoxy is another man's doxy." And the great public, *au fond*, may prefer the simpler respectabilities.

The film is, in point of fact, too long, too full of loose ends, too meandering. But even in the most inchoate and unnecessary sequences, it usually throws up a flash of the sharper sort of fun. To begin with, it is a good story. A suburban young chap (a corporal in the Boy's Brigade, no less) is entangled in the deathbed of an international spy, whose car has crashed through the flimsy suburban house-wall. The spy, sending doctors and police from the room, announces he is about to reveal a vital secret—the very arcana which conceals the powers of peace and war. The young man (well played by Neil Hamilton) is made to swear a fearful oath of secrecy, and the spy promptly dies, having revealed nothing. None of the key-hole boys, however, will believe that the secret has gone to the grave, and the rest of the film devolves round the frantic efforts of foreign agents and the British Cabinet to extract it at all costs.

Presumably in order to cover up his satirical tracks, the director has added several sequences of pure thrill (cars, aeroplanes, parachutes) which fit the fantasy well enough, and other sequences of low comedy, which fit it not so well (two up to Bishop Warburton).

The low comedy, incidentally, is supplied by the divine Claude Dampier, who could be made—preferably with a team-mate—into a first-line film comedian. But here his gorgeous inanities are wasted once again, and he is stuck onto the film—to use Cavalcanti's phrase—like a postage stamp.

THE loveliest moment in the film occurs in the Tower, where the young man is very properly incarcerated by order of the Prime Minister. Alarmed by rumours of impending execution, he is not unaverse to a friendly visit from a cultured beefeater in full uniform. In the course of a conversation about beheadings, he remarks to the beefeater—"Of course, they can't do that to me." "I shouldn't be too sure," says the beefeater—"That's what I thought"—On which he removes his head, and tucks it under his arm, where it continues an urbane and gentlemanly conversation. Brilliantly timed, this little sequence smacks out of the screen like a wind from another world. In similar vein, the address by the Prime Minister at an election meeting is based on many variants of the "Sealed-lips" theme, interrupted by blasts of "Colonel Bogey" from a completely uncontrollable brass band.

If the courageous originality of the film is due to the individual efforts of Randall Faye, who directed, he deserves a vote of thanks from everyone who prefers panache to pancakes, and an apology from everyone else for the bitter fact that the film was not a box-office success. True, it needed the scissors, and didn't get them. But equally true it is that it had the goods and few would take delivery.

RETURNING to the more ordinary aspects of the rummage sale, the eye is caught by *Big City*, if only because it combines two stock plots which are usually kept carefully separate—the tough slapstick of near-gangsterdom and the treacly sentimentality of a Borzage. And thereby hangs a tale, for Borzage directed. The film begins grandly—as is true of any film starring Spencer Tracy—but after fifteen minutes of humour and savagery, the mush creeps in, and Borzage reverts solidly to type for several reels. The last reel, however, which is devoted to the smashing of a number of tough taxi-drivers by the Sporting Club of New York (including Joe Beckett, Jack Johnson, the Man-Mountain and many others—all in the flesh) makes up for all else, and is brilliantly shot and cut. What matter if Luise Rainer is very privately having a baby in the nearby ambulance, thus regrettably keeping Spencer Tracy out of the fight? It at least gives us a chance to forget what Borzage rams at us throughout the rest of the film—that she is a great actress. After *The Good Earth* this attempt at versatility falls very flat, and she should be referred back to a certain remark of Pythagoras—"Do not devour thy heart." Least of all, we may add, in cold blood, in front of a movie camera, and for five reels.

‘UNCROWNED KING OF IRELAND’

Charles Stewart Parnell,
subject of the M.G.M. film
released this month



Above: Clark Gable as Parnell and Myrna Loy as Katie O'Shea. Though Gable gives a sincere performance he is clearly unsuited to the part.

Left: Meeting of the Irish Party at which the demand for Parnell's resignation causes a split.

Below: The dying Parnell urges his countrymen to continue the fight for Home Rule. The split, however, has weakened the Irish Party, and Home Rule does not appear again as a strong issue until just before the Great War.



More and more the movies turn to serious themes, adding enlightenment to entertainment as in *Pasteur*, *Zola* and *Parnell*.

Parnell is an account of the years 1880-1891, the years of Parnell's greatest public influence; his triumphant vindication in the case of the Piggott forgeries, which brought Home Rule within reach; and his dramatic fall.

In 1880 he had fallen in love with the wife of Captain O'Shea. The Captain's divorce proceedings in 1890 made the affair public and shocked British Liberal opinion. The consequent demand for Parnell's resignation split the Irish Party, cost him his leadership, and, it is said, postponed Irish Home Rule.



GUIDE to NOVEMBER RELEASES



MAKE WAY FOR TO-MORROW * *

(Paramount) Victor Moore, Beulah Bondi, Fay Bainter, Thomas Mitchell and Barbara Read.

First-rate performances by Victor Moore and Beulah Bondi distinguish this drama of an old couple who become a nuisance to their grown-up families. Unable to fit into the lives of these younger families, conscious of being in the way, they leave; the mother to the Home for the Aged, the father to distant California.

Brilliant direction by Leo McCarey lends delicacy and genuine tragedy.

I MET HIM IN PARIS

(Paramount) Claudette Colbert, Robert Young and Melvyn Douglas.

Bright and light comedy in which Claudette Colbert, en route for Paris, meets Robert Young and Melvyn Douglas, and joins them on a holiday in Switzerland. Robert Young is already married so Douglas gets Colbert after some amusing situations, helped on by good dialogue and able direction by Wesley Ruggles. Opening is slow, but picture gathers impetus towards the end. Good acting and direction ably covers up thin story.

UNDER THE RED ROBE

(20th Century-Fox) Conrad Veidt, Annabella, Raymond Massey, Romney Brent, Sophie Stewart.

Swashbuckling costume drama with Conrad Veidt as Gil de Berault and Annabella as Lady Marguerite.

CALL IT A DAY

(Warner Bros.) Ian Hunter, Alice Brady, Frieda Inescourt, Roland Young, Olivia de Havilland, Peggy Wood, Anita Louise.

Film version of Dodie Smith's West End success. Entertaining comedy showing Spring affecting an ornately housed English suburban family. Every rôle competently filled by an excellent cast.

SARATOGA

(Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer) Jean Harlow, Clark Gable, Lionel Barrymore, Frank Morgan.

Racing comedy-drama, partly filmed with a substitute for Harlow, whose death occurred before the picture was completed. The tricked and fabricated parts emphasize how vivid and striking a personality the screen has lost. Picture has little life when Harlow is off the screen.

FAREWELL AGAIN * *

(London Films) Leslie Banks, Flora Robson, Robert Newton, Maire O'Neill, Robert Cochran.

Based on real-life incident. Soldiers return to England after years of foreign service and are ordered abroad again after six hours in dock. Film takes several characters of various ranks in the regiment, and shows the meaning of those precise six hours to each. Each man has his own domestic problems, tragic or humorous; made touchingly human. Entire cast, down to those who speak but a few lines, give sincere and appealing performances. Worthy of notice because it brings a real incident to the screen and makes it convincing and entertaining.

MARKED WOMAN

(Warner-First National) Bette Davis, Humphrey Bogart, Eduardo Cianelli, Isabel Jewell.

Takes you behind the scenes of the night clubs owned and controlled by gangsters. Story of the beautiful girls who serve as hostesses in these night-clubs, tools of the big time racketeers. Humphrey Bogart appears this time as crusader of the law and Eduardo Cianelli is the chief racketeer. Bette Davis as one of the night club girls gives one of her best performances. Good acting, tense situations and plenty of vivid incident.

WOMAN CHASES MAN

(United Artists) Miriam Hopkins, Joel McCrea, Charles Winninger, Erik Rhodes.

Crazy story reversing the position of stern, wealthy father and ne'er-do-well son to erratic father and practical son. Director John Blystone makes the most of available material, but chief honours go to Miriam Hopkins. Special for Hopkins fans.

THE EMPEROR'S CANDLESTICKS

(Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer) William Powell, Luise Rainer, Robert Young, Maureen O'Sullivan, Frank Morgan.

Old story about international spies, with the world shattering documents hidden this time in a pair of candlesticks. The candlesticks are stolen and the resulting chase across Europe by spies Rainer and Powell to reclaim their communications, is the chief action and interest part of this unreal pre-war drama.

The charm of the two stars, with the help of an excellent supporting cast, helps to redeem the picture. Directed with more care than the story merits, by George Fitzmaurice.



STORM IN A TEACUP * *

(London Films) Vivien Leigh, Rex Harrison, Cecil Parker, Sara Allgood.

Unusual and amusing comedy of a pompous Provost of a small Scots community, his attractive daughter and an independent English reporter.

Story shows reporter puncturing vanity of Provost by arousing the sympathy of the community, for local Irishwoman's dog which has been seized for non-payment of license. Leads up to excellent courtroom scene, reminiscent of the *Mr. Deeds* pixilated sequence, and after some amusing incidents, boy gets girl and dog gets freedom.

Good cast extracts full quota of humour from neat dialogue.

THE DEVIL IS DRIVING

(Columbia) Richard Dix, Joan Perry, Nana Bryant, Frank C. Wilson.

Indictment against drunken driving, pointed particularly to the class most able to buy perjuring witnesses. Picture carries good deal of punch, mixing politics, society and family life of the poor. Powerful court scene when Dix, as D.A., indicts himself, to expose political grafters. Worth seeing.

THE ROAD BACK

(Universal) John King, Richard Cromwell, "Slim" Summerville, Andy Devine, Barbara Read.

Record of lives of group of young German soldiers seeking road back to life after spending four years in trenches. Not as harsh and bitter as Remarque's novel but contains many memorable moments. Richard Cromwell and John Emery turn in best acting jobs. At times impressive drama with courageous ending.

WAKE UP AND LIVE

(20th Century-Fox) Walter Winchell, Ben Bernie.

Lively musical, based on radio rivalry between two actual people, Walter Winchell, New York Columnist, and Ben Bernie, band leader. Fast-moving, entertaining comedy.

HIS AFFAIR

(20th Century-Fox) Robert Taylor, Barbara Stanwyck, Victor McLaglen.

Period melodrama of America fifty years ago. Story deals with secret mission entrusted to young naval lieutenant to discover identity of man behind widespread series of bank robberies. Plenty of excitement.

REVIEW OF REVIEWS Edited by H. E. Blyth

Review of the Month

Victoria the Great

(Herbert Wilcox—Radio).

Anna Neagle, Anton Walbrook.

To do justice to the picture it must first be admitted that some of its success is due to novelty and some to curiosity. Whilst the lifting of the prohibition on representations of Queen Victoria remains recent the mere portrayal of her, whether on stage or screen, has an interest not intrinsically connected with history or histrionics. We are seeing something we have not been allowed to see. Later generations may perhaps interpret the reign of Victoria, with the Monarch taking her rightful place in it. To-day it is too early, and it is, further, apparently too early for Victoria to be expressed. In the film, as in the plays at the Lyric, the most that can be done is to represent her. The most that we, as audience, can hope is that, since she is an historical figure, the history will not be too flagrantly falsified.

The film, again like the plays, avoids this by keeping history in the background. Naturally, the position of the Queen and her husband entails that many of their actions have passed into history and can be neither altered nor ignored. We see, as it were, the familiar stories enacted. There is talk of affairs of State, of India, and of America, and *Victoria the Great* even goes as far as including the Corn Laws among its anecdotes. But all this somehow remains talk. We have no feeling of the England behind the Throne, of the country beyond Buckingham Palace, or of the colonies beyond the country. This, at the moment, is too much for either play or picture to tackle; author, actress, and director limit themselves to the portrayal of the Queen.

The portrait is inevitably made superficial by this limitation. It seems also a reproduction more than an original. Here in the film we have the same scenes and the same events, somewhat episodically strung together. The film is less episodic than might be imagined and that is one of its merits. Against that must be put the constant use of subtitles explaining dates and environments. English filmgoers are liable to recognise Windsor at sight; these blackboard captions give the impression that the film is designed to instruct larger audiences in the rudiments of nineteenth-century English history, and once we feel that we become aware of a simplification of the theme. But throughout the course of the picture we are strongly aware of sobriety in its handling. We appreciate the official assistance given to its making and approve, in the main, of the dialogue.

Anna Neagle approaches her rôle assured of a respect created by her previous hard work. At first she appears unsuited in stature to represent the Queen, and it seems that camera angles are chosen so as not to place too great a strain on her acting. But she manages to deliver the line "We are not amused" as a retort and not as a tag, and in general does all that is required and all that is allowed by the script. She is surrounded by an excellent cast, which includes C. V. France, Anton Walbrook (as Prince Albert), H. B. Warner, Felix Aylmer, Lewis Casson and many others.



"Influenced the public welfare . . ."

All these fall dutifully into line in relating how the married life of the Monarch happily influenced the public welfare of her country, and when the film blazes into Technicolour for the last reel there is no denying the vividness of its message that the Queen was regarded and is to be remembered as the mother of many races.

—R. H., *The Manchester Guardian*

I found *Victoria the Great* a good show. Its interest held. It was well directed, well photographed. More than that, its subordinate rôles were admirably played. Some parts of the film fascinated. Some enthralled. None was boring. But the picture does not compare with Laurence Housman's play. *Victoria the Great* shows her in the right. It does not mention any of the cases in which she was wrong. Nor, frankly, does it explain the dominance of her character. Still, we must all remember that Victoria's reign was so long, and her experiences so numerous, that no play, no book, no film, could do justice to all sides of a personality that had a profound influence on the life, not only of Britain but, indeed, of the whole world. —Hannen Swaffer, *The People*

It has often been observed that anybody taking his notion of the history of the time from the novels of Jane Austen would remain ignorant of Trafalgar and Waterloo. The makers of *Victoria the Great* resemble Jane Austen in that they give us no notion whatever of the England over which Victoria ruled, except for one shot depicting a rabble demanding the repeal of the Corn Laws.

—James Agate, *The Tatler*

Critical Summary.

It would seem that a director, like a prophet, is not without honour. . . . The rapturous applause given to this film in Venice and in New York was not altogether echoed by critics in this country. Some were enthusiastic, some non-committal, some merely sniffed. But no historical film or play will ever please everyone, least of all when it deals with recent events. As the portrait of an age, and perhaps the most remarkable age in our history, "*Victoria the Great*" remains largely incomplete and uninformative, although it admittedly seems doubtful whether any one film could hope to deal with so vast a subject and yet remain entertainment. And undeniably this is good entertainment, an historical romance in the film tradition, and notable, at least, for the fact that it is an English picture which has most successfully invaded the American market.

Dead End

(William Wyler—United Artists).

Sylvia Sidney, Joel McCrea, Humphrey Bogart.

I think Miss Hellman's adaptation is extremely sensible, and the result is a fine, showy, exciting movie, more ambitious by far than the average movie of underworld and of life on New York streets and river front. The play, however, as I remember it, was unusual in the theatre. The exact language of the boys was remarkable in itself, and the manufactured illusion of the dock added a kind of circus element of surprise to the production. The nursery decorum of the movies has toned down the repartee of the boys, and the the richest and most careful photography of wharves, tenements, and adjoining palazzos can hardly seem striking to us by this time. The play was novel and special, but the film, excellent as it is, fits into the pigeon-hole of underworld movies, possibly ranking there even with *Winterset*. Altogether, the picture—incidentally a protest against reform schools and their curricula—becomes one of the handsome films of our city's lowest life, and one of the most exciting of them.

—John Mosher, *The New Yorker*

Samuel Goldwyn's screen transcription of *Dead End* deserves a place among the important motion pictures of 1937 for its stout and well-presented reiteration of the social protest that was the theme of the original Sidney Kingsley stage play. As a picture of life in an East River dead end street, where hopeless squalor rubs daily against Sutton Place elegance with no more salutary effect on either than mutual irritation, it is again an arresting, inductive consideration of the slum problem, a prima facie case for a revision of the social system. As a motion picture, however, it has technical faults, mainly its rigid adherence to the physical form of the play (seemingly a much too frugal use of so mobile an instrument as the camera), and its reshaping of of the play's pivotal character to make him conform to the accepted cinema hero type. But in spite of these relatively unimportant failings (both can be convincingly defended), the story of the frustrations and rebellions of the underprivileged people of *Dead End* has been brought smoothly and forcefully to the screen by an admirable cast.

—J. T. M., *The New York Times*



"Squalor rubs against elegance . . ."

Café Metropole

(Edward H. Griffith—20th Century-Fox).

Loretta Young, Tyrone Power, Adolphe Menjou.

Lightly, gaily and impudently, *Café Metropole* upsets the old axiom that "honesty is the best policy" as surely as does M. Guitry's satirical essay on a kindred subject. For Victor, manager of a fashionable Parisian restaurant, has been helping himself to loans from the cash-box, and proposes to make good the deficit out of the pocket of his richest client, a New York magnate. In the person of Adolphe Menjou Victor is such a plausible rogue, so dexterous in wriggling out of tight corners, so courteous and entertaining, that we can applaud his audacity and success. *Café Metropole* is decidedly Menjou's picture, charmingly decorated though it is by Loretta Young, and strengthened by Charles Winninger and Helen Westley's excellent comedy. The director handles a complicated story adroitly, though some of the situations are prolonged beyond the strength of the play's brittle but often sparkling fabric.

—Michael Orme, *The Sketch*

When a film has Adolphe Menjou in one of the best bits of work he has done for some time, lovely Loretta Young, in the modern character which suits her so much more than costume rôles, and that amazing young man, Tyrone Power, grabbing a dozen more rungs in his rapid ascent of the ladder of success, it must be good. But this film also has a not-too-stale idea, some very bright dialogue, and admirable good-humoured direction. So it comes, more or less unheralded, as one of the most attractive comedies of the year. Tyrone is forced to pose as a Russian prince to lure an American heiress, with whom, of course, he falls in love. The advent of the real Russian prince (played by Gregory Ratoff, who wrote the original story) complicates the comedy, which is acted with finesse and spirit by all concerned.

—A. Jympson Harman, *The Evening News*

A Star is Born

(William A. Wellman—Selznick International).

Janet Gaynor, Fredric March, Adolphe Menjou.

No apology need be made for referring once again to this picture in these columns. It begins badly and it ends badly, which is not unusual even in a good picture, for Hollywood can seldom resist that final superfluous touch. But for all that it is a notable film, and notable not merely because it is in colour and the colour is for once unnoticed; not merely because it is unusual, presenting an aspect of Hollywood not often seen; not merely because it is bitter, and cynical and tender all at the same time; but because here, for once, is a picture almost perfectly cast, written with understanding, sincerity and a real sense of character, well acted in all its parts except one, and that one a memorable performance indeed. Fredric March will never do anything better than this portrayal of a falling star. This is not tragedy, but it is yet something strangely moving and sad, and all the more so because he has deliberately underplayed the scenes which a lesser actor would have over dramatised, and has therefore given them an added power. It may be that we shall not see a better performance in 1937.

—H. E. B., *World Film News*

W.F.N. Selection

The Life of Emile Zola * * *

Dead End * *

Mr. Stringfellow Says No *

Big City *

Knight Without Armour *

Victoria the Great *

The Prisoner of Zenda *

Le Roman d'un Tricheur *

Films Covered in this Issue

Café Metropole

A Star is Born

Broadway Melody of 1938

Gangway

Non-stop New York

Broadway Melody of 1938

(Roy Del Ruth—Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer).

Robert Taylor, Eleanor Powell.

Historians will remember that two Broadways back we were all talking about this Taylor boy, and speculating as to whether or not he would last the pace. In the new version he has very little to do; he belongs to the story, but he does not belong to the dance routines and the singing numbers which make up most of the picture. So he pops in and out gracefully, at times a little amused at such odd surroundings. Miss Powell, who was virtually an unknown two years ago, dances with her customary vigour and grace. I think she has more charm than any other screen musical comedy star. There are some pleasant supporting performances by people like Robert Benchley, and Sophie Tucker, whose genius is revered by everyone living except myself, lends that furious voice of hers. Fifteen-year-old Judy Garland, who is evidently a minor Tucker, gives vent in somewhat similar manner. I suggest that Miss Garland's owners or parents either have her taught to sing melodiously, or not at all. It is terrible to think that a new generation of hot mommas is being trained to succeed the old.

—Connery Chappell, *The Sunday Dispatch*

To coincide with the arrival of "Emperor" Taylor in our town, Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer have sent his latest film *Broadway Melody of 1938*. There is nothing in this egregious production to support the widespread propaganda that His Imperial Majesty is directly descended from the Sun. He makes only brief and insignificant appearances, interludes of dullness between displays of talent by such various artistes as Sophie Tucker and Eleanor Powell. There is one shot specially designed for his millions of female subjects; a picture of the Imperial mouth engaged in a particularly succulent osculation—so close did the camera approach at this intimate moment, that if the screen were a map of the World on Mercator's projection, Mr. Taylor's pendulous lower-lip would cover the whole of the U.S. and half the Atlantic Ocean. But this kiss is all he contributes to the entertainment value of the film.

—Truth

Critical Summary.

Heaven—and certainly Fleet Street—forbid that this department should ever take it into its head to criticize, as well as to compile, the work of the critics, but the case of Robert Taylor does provide an excuse to remind some writers that it is the duty of a critic to express opinions and not complexes. The private life of a star has nothing whatsoever to do with his work on the screen, and the fact that Robert Taylor was mobbed by hysterical women on his arrival in this country provides no commentary on his acting ability.

Gangway

(Sonnie Hale—Gaumont-British).

Jessie Matthews, Barry Mackay, Nat Pendleton.

Jessie Matthews, who lost some ground with her last film, recovers it in this lively musical, in which the tempo is so snappy that the Atlantic dwindles to a ditch. Jessie's whimsical flair for a comedy situation; the instinctive charm which she brings to every emergency, whether it be song, dance, or dialogue, and the intuitive grace of her moments of repose, even when merely listening, combine to make an irresistible onslaught of wistful and winsome femininity. Sonnie Hale wrote the ingenious story and directed the picture, which flatters Hollywood technique more than anything produced in our studios this year.

—G. A. Atkinson, *The Sunday Referee*



"Charm to every emergency . . ."

URGES SCHOOL EQUIPMENT

Kenneth Lindsay, M.P., Parliamentary Secretary to the Board of Education, deplored, in opening the London Film School, a summer course at the University of London, that only 810 schools out of 32,000 in the British Isles had film projectors, against 17,000 in Germany, 10,097 in the U.S.A. and 9,400 in France.

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Gangway

(Continued)

Gangway presents Miss Jessie Matthews as a girl reporter—to be exact, an "Asst. Film Critic"—who tracks down an international jewel thief by singing and dancing. Miss Matthews dances her way to America and catches the criminal, in the sort of refined romp that England obviously supposes that America thinks that English films should be. Oh, by the way, there's a joke in the title, if you look at it attentively. You can read it *Gangway*—like that, one word—or *Gang Way*—like that, two words. It's only a small point—not serious, really. But one might as well give credit where credit is due.

—C. A. Lejeune, *The Sunday Observer*

Non-Stop New York

(Robert Stevenson—Gaumont-British).

John Loder, Anna Lee, Francis Sullivan, Frank Cellier, Desmond Tester.

Robert Stevenson will mean much to the reputation of British films if he goes on like this. *Non-Stop New York* proves him to be a cunning assimilator of the best Hollywood traditions in direction. It is a film as admirably compounded of comedy and thrills, as confidently and expertly directed and as slickly produced as you could wish. We have the stars, we have the stories, and clearly it is the swift touch of a right-minded director that is needed to put British thrillers in a modern setting on a level with the first-quality American products in this genre. The film takes wings, literally and figuratively, yet the twists of plot are never obscure, nor too involved. Airway dramas we have seen in plenty, but this shows better grasp than most of just what can be done with a well-assorted lot of characters sitting up aloft. There may be nothing very new at any point, but it is all so slickly treated as to seem new, which is all that matters. All the parts are very well played, and the whole of the thrills and the laughter are neatly dovetailed together with touches of finesse that leave no room for tedium.

—*The Birmingham Mail*

Knight Without Armour

(Jacques Feyder—London Films).

Marlene Dietrich, Robert Donat, John Clements.

When the study of hokum has been a little further advanced it will be possible to say whether Mr. James Hilton's story or Mr. Korda's film of it is the most artistic. For the moment there must be some in favour of Mr. Korda's star crossing of lovers and revised ending, and others who prefer Mr. Hilton's own understatement and faux-relentlessness. Miss Dietrich



"Just a Movie . . ."

looks nice occasionally and, when bathing, positively alluring, but she never gets within miles of the character. Mr. Donat acts the Englishman as before, very decently but monotonously. The smaller parts are better conceived and better done too. A mad station-master signalling unseen trains is brilliant. The technical qualities are remarkable for an English film. The trains look like trains, snow like snow and a Russian country house is just what one expects it to be. The director is M. Jacques Feyder who made *Kermesse Hérolque*. Although this is not by any means a first-rate film, the direction, the technique and the story make it well worth seeing.

—*The New Statesman and Nation*

British agent caught in the Russian revolution saves countess. Donat and Dietrich. Some exciting action, some snotty attitudes. Preserves "impartiality" on the revolution by caricaturing the whites as ice-blooded aristos, by caricaturing the reds as swinish palace-looters. Rather offensive at times, but manages to remain just a movie.

—Meyer Levin, *Esquire*

Critical Summary.

Everyone agreed that this picture was well made and good entertainment. Similarly nearly everyone agreed that it was a disappointment. So much had been expected of it, with two famous stars directed by one whose previous work had been acclaimed as being of quite exceptional merit. Miss Dietrich, exquisitely photographed, was found by one critic to be guilty at times of "unpardonable complacency," and another regretted that Robert Donat's talent for comedy had unfortunately to be ignored. Indeed the picture came perilously near to being stolen by John Clements, who received the warmest praise from all sides for his portrait of the tragic young commissar. But altogether a great deal of trouble seems to have been taken over something really not quite worth it. Or as Miss Lejeune remarked "it seems to me a pity to have taken a whale of a story and turned it, at such expense, too, into a sole bonne femme."

The Prisoner of Zenda

(John Cromwell—Selznick International).

Ronald Colman, Madeleine Carroll, Douglas Fairbanks Jr., Mary Astor.

Certainly this is one of the best things in its class. They throw in everything but the War of the Roses and elephants, and if you were to question the producers on the probability of any one scene they would take you for someone from the Department of International Revenue; yet once the story is accepted, you can see how they have worked at it with sincerity and scrupulous care, treating its hokum almost with dignity. Ronald Colman in the main double rôle is one reason why the scenes are built into credibility; and Madeleine Carroll as Flavia is another reason, though it is unfortunate that anyone so lovely should occasionally suggest Ann Harding; Douglas Fairbanks Jr. makes a good ornamental rogue; and C. Aubrey Smith is there for background. (Raymond Massey, if I were running the show, would speak all his lines with his back to the camera, through an interpreter). So the young king is saved from himself and his brother, love is renounced and the national welfare invoked, and Zenda lives again, if any.

—Otis Ferguson, *The New Republic*



"A good ornamental rogue . . ."

With all the Graustarkian punctilio this corner can muster up, we rise, click our heels, toast the Selznick International production of *The Prisoner of Zenda* and smash the glass. Here is proper, swashbuckling adventure, set in that vast mythical land (of which Zenda is a province) where honour is brighter, villainy unregenerate and beauty incomparable. Here is pomp and circumstance so intricately woven into the story that every measured pace of it simply bristles with excitement. Here is grand characterization, tastefully expensive production and direction that seeks out dramatic values in everything. Here is the most pleasing film that has come along in ages. The trick photography wherewith the two Rudolfs are shown together is so convincing that this reviewer believed, until he was corrected by someone in the know, that one or the other of the Rudolfs was a double.

—J. T. M., *The New York Times*

Le Roman d'un Tricheur

(Sacha Guitry—French).

Sacha Guitry, Jacqueline Delubac.

M. Sacha Guitry was delighting French audiences in the theatre some years before the film, as we know it, was born, and it is therefore all the more surprising to find him taking this new medium in his stride, and indeed giving the cinema a notable lesson in originality. Even the tedious details of cast, technicians and the rest, which the filmgoer accepts as a necessary prelude to a film, take on a new interest in his hands as he allows his camera to wander casually round the studio and introduces us with engaging intimacy to his staff as they are discovered at their work. M. Guitry himself, as the cheat who gives to the film its title, is discovered in reminiscent mood seated at a table outside a café, and armed with pen and ink preparatory to writing his adventurous biography, and he it is who provides the film with its illuminating, philosophical and almost racy commentary, while the characters themselves remain silent. The history of the cheat is traced from earliest youth through various stages of uncertain integrity as page-boy, soldier, Casino croupier, gambler and man of the world until, with the final triumphant writing of "Fin" to the last page of his memoirs with the café's rather scratchy pen, he brings the film to a close. Regretfully we leave him to gossip with the waiter over his wine, having spent a most enjoyable hour in his company. We have chuckled delightedly throughout, as much intrigued by his experiences as by his refusal to accept the unimaginative formalities of the cinema.

—*The Times*

PEOPLE OF THE STUDIOS

● GREAT BRITAIN Denham



Latest addition to the M.G.M.-British production staff is Victor Saville, forty-year-old director and producer. His first subject for the company will be Dr. A. J. Cronin's exposure of medical graft, *The Citadel*, rights of which he won in a bidding contest with Hollywood companies. Donat may get the top spot, other engagements permitting.

One-time renter and exhibitor, Saville joined up with Gaumont-British in 1920, directing silents. Talkies include *Michael and Mary*, *I Was a Spy*, *The Good Companions*, *Friday the 13th* and *The Dictator*. Last year he became associate producer to Korda, making *Dark Journey*, *Storm in a Teacup* and *Action for Slander*.

One of M.G.M.'s five pictures scheduled for London production will be *And So Victoria*, lengthy novel by William Vaughn Wilkins. Rumoured also that Garbo will star in another—for some time she has been desirous of making films in this country due to its proximity to her native land, and the recent differences she has had with her company over story material may bring matters to a head. Meantime *A Yank at Oxford* holds the floor with Griffith Jones and Vivien Leigh supporting Robert Taylor and Maureen O'Sullivan. Elmer Dyer, ace aerial photographer, has been shooting location backgrounds for *Shadow of the Wing* which follows, and R. C. Sheriff has been signed up to script P. C. Wren's *Spur of Pride* and Remarque's *Three Comrades*. Taylor has his eye on the latter, hoping to steer clear of *Broadway Melodies* in the future.

Jack Hulbert's musical went through a title-changing epidemic when in quick succession it was re-christened *Playboy*, *Kiss Me Goodnight* and *Paradise for Two*. Latter title now holds.

Sam Goldwyn and Walter Wanger, oldest and newest of United Artists' producers, are contemplating production at Denham. Goldwyn plans a *Follies* subject in Technicolour, and Wanger contemplates two pictures—one a musical, the other a wise-cracking comedy.

In our September issue, on the information of a usually reliable correspondent, we published a paragraph to the effect that we had heard that technical troubles in the Denham Laboratories had caused delay to productions, necessitating reshooting of certain sections, and that these troubles were being investigated.

We have received from Solicitors acting on behalf of Denham Laboratories, Limited, a letter in which they inform us that the statements are untrue, and that the few technical adjustments which might be expected to be necessary at the commencement of the Laboratory's commercial working were disposed of six months ago, also, that at no time had any technical trouble caused delays to productions nor had any reshooting to be done.

In these circumstances we express our apologies to Denham Laboratories Limited for any wrong impressions our paragraph may have created.

Pinewood

The industry has discovered Gilbert and Sullivan, and the D'Oyly Carte Company has parted with film rights of the operas. The General Cinema Finance Corporation has formed a special unit for production of the operas, first of which will be *Yeoman of the Guard*, to be made at Pinewood and distributed by G.F.D. No cast yet fixed.

Wendy Hiller, Manchester-born actress who helped to steer *Love on the Dole* through the theatrical depression, gets the lead in the Paramount British picture *Lancashire Luck*, with George Carney. Story is by Ronald Gow, who collaborated with Walter Greenwood on *Love on the Dole*. Henry Cass is directing.

John Paddy Carstairs directs *Incident in Shanghai*, story of the Sino-Japanese war. Janet Johnson is starring.

Break the News, current Jack Buchanan picture, marks M. René Clair's return to musical comedy. Music and lyrics are by American composer Cole Porter, of *Gay Divorce* and *Born to Dance*, sets are the work of Lazare Meerson, responsible for those in *La Kermesse Héroïque* and *Knight Without Armour*; stars are Jack Buchanan from England, Maurice Chevalier from France, June Knight from America. Adele Astaire, formerly in Miss Knight's role, bowed out after story difficulties.



After an arduous year actor-producer-director Buchanan is on Broadway in *Between the Devil* with Evelyn Laye. In the last nine months he has concluded his stage show *This'll Make You Whistle*, organised his own production company, directed the production of three pictures and starred in two.

Elstree

Charles Laughton has returned to Elstree, once England's Hollywood, to play Ginger Ted, a drunken beachcomber, in Somerset Maugham's *Vessel of Wrath*. Elsa Lanchester is the missionary and Tyrone Guthrie her brother. Exterior scenes were shot in the South of France, where a South Sea Jungle was constructed on the edge of the sea.

Picture is Bartlett Cormack's first directorial effort. Educated at Chicago University, Cormack has been journalist, stock company actor, company manager, press agent, playwright and script-writer. Currently he is working on a cavalcade of Fleet Street inspired by the closing down of "The Morning Post," in which Charles Laughton will play the editor of a paper which liquidates after a long and glorious history. Cormack was associated with Ben Hecht and Charles MacArthur when they were newspapermen in Chicago, and was responsible for the screenplays of their *Front Page*, and for *Gentlemen of the Press*, two newspaper stories. *Fury* was his biggest writing effort.

First picture on the new A.B.P. programme is *The Terror*, Edgar Wallace thriller to be Richard Bird's first job of directing.

Teddington

As a consolation for theatrical sentimentalists who mourn the passing of the Alhambra and Daly's in Leicester Square, fittings, panellings and familiar objects in the latter house will be preserved at Teddington for use in pictures with theatrical backgrounds. Other bronzes, paintings and statuary from the old theatre will be included in the new Warner Cinema erected on the site.

Not included in our list of foreign executives in the "Flora and Fauna" article of our September issue was American-born Mr. Jerry Jackson, chief associate producer and second in command to Mr. Asher for the past three years. To his credit goes the introduction to films of Max Miller, one of Teddington's successes.

Irving Asher is enthusing over twenty-two-year-old Aino Bergo, of Swedish origin, who was spotted by a Warner scout in a German film *Paradise Women*. After a spot of grooming she will be exported to the company's larger studios in Hollywood, where Mr. Asher's last discovery, Errol Flynn, has justified the faith that was put in him.

Elsewhere

At St. Margaret's Studio Julius Hagen is delivering quota product for M.G.M. First scheduled is James Ronald's novel, *Death Croons the Blues*.

Tom Walls has Jane Baxter as leading lady in *Second Best Bed*, new Ben Travers comedy at Sound City. Title is taken from Shakespeare's will: "I give unto my wife my second best bed."

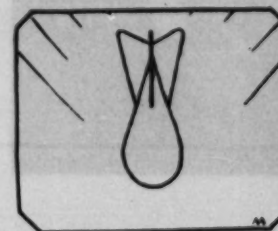
After more than a year's inactivity Paul Soskin's unit starts up again with a two-picture line-up for British Lion release. First is John Buchan's *Huntingtower*, now shooting at Beaconsfield.

● AMERICA

20th Century-Fox

Hollywood is doing a Sino-Japanese war-dance. Taking advantage of the current news-interest, Darryl Zanuck, Fox Chief, got away first with *Shanghai Deadline*, new title for *International Settlement*, which started production a week or two back. Now Radio have started *North of Shanghai*; Warners have changed the title of *War Lord*, Boris Karloff picture, to *West of Shanghai*; Paramount are re-issuing *Shanghai Express* and have taken Robert Florey off a Gladys Swarthout musical to direct Anna May Wong in *Daughter of Shanghai*, because he had lately been in Japan collecting material for *Madame Butterfly*.

Zanuck had been worried for some months by Gregory Ratoff's plea to direct, as the latter's story ideas seemed more valuable. Finally the Fox boss tossed him the toughest assignment he had—Ratoff's own story *Shanghai Deadline*—and expected him to throw it over. But Ratoff took



on the job, and Zanuck now wants him to forget the writing and stick to direction. Stars in the picture are Cesar Romero, Virginia Fields, June Lang and Peter Lorre.

Radio

Judging by reports of *Stage Door*, big bow should be taken by director Gregory La Cava who has created a new Hepburn, made a promising actress of Ginger Rogers, and guided Andrea Leeds to stardom. Picture is drawing big money in the States.



The Marx Brothers have signed a contract for three pictures with Radio, first of which will be *Room Service*. £55,000 has been paid for the rights of the play.

Cost of *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs*, new Disney feature-length cartoon, has exceeded \$1,100,000 to date. Release is expected some time in December, and Disney gets down to another feature, *Bambi*.

Katharine Hepburn now steps into *Bringing Up Baby* with Cary Grant as leading man, and Miss Rogers, after polishing off *Vivacious Lady* which was postponed owing to James Stewart's illness, starts *Having Wonderful Time*. Douglas Fairbanks Jr. has been contracted for male interest, and returns to the RKO lot for the first time in three years.

Meanwhile Fred Astaire concentrates on *A Damsel in Distress* which George Stevens is directing. George Burns, Gracie Allen, and English orchestra-leader Ray Noble are in the cast. Coveted role of leading lady to Astaire in the latter's first solo starring vehicle goes to Joan Fontaine, who was discovered less than a year ago by Jesse Lasky playing in a Hollywood Little Theatre Production. She made her debut in a big role in *Quality Street*, shortly afterwards playing opposite Preston Foster in *You Can't Beat Love*.

Next picture re-uniting the Astaire-Rogers team will be *Castles in the Air*. Story deals with Vernon and Irene Castle, first professional ballroom team to win fame and fortune. Pandro S. Berman will produce, Oscar Hammerstein direct, Irene Castle act as technical advisor.

United Artists

Old-line producers were greatly shocked of late when Walter Wanger decided to photograph an actual dawn on New York's Fifth Avenue for his *Vogues*. Stock stuff had been used to indicate the locality for so long that most of Hollywood had forgotten the place really existed.

Wanger's coming programme includes Madeleine Carroll's *Personal History*, to be followed by *The River is Blue*, Spanish civil war story with Sylvia Sydney. Hecht and MacArthur are scripting *Wuthering Heights*, which they regard as their best joint writing effort to date.

Tallulah Bankhead is definitely set for the Scarlet O'Hara role in *Gone with the Wind*. Ann Harding is reported to be testing for the part of Melanie, and latest rumours have it that Clarke Gable and Fredric March may be cast.

Reports that Charlie Chaplin will abandon his tramp roles for a "new personality" are emphatically denied. At present he is working on his first talkie, to star Paulette Goddard. He writes, directs and produces, but will not appear in it.

Jimmy Wong Howe, only Chinese cameraman in the industry, is nursing the idea of filming his native country. He had cherished the idea of doing camerawork on *The Good Earth*, but when the assignment failed to materialise he resolved

to turn producer and director. Ambition is to record in film the lives of millions of his countrymen who dwell in sampans on the Chinese rivers.

Born in China as Wong Tung Jim, Howe was educated in America, received his early camera training under de Mille, starting as a camera carrier and ending as a chief. Most important pictures were *The Trail of the Lonesome Pine*, and *Laugh, Clown, Laugh* in the silent era, and and more recently *Viva Villa*, *The Thin Man*, *Fire Over England* and *The Prisoner of Zenda*. His technical inventions in camera construction are highly valued in Hollywood.

Paramount

Marlene Dietrich gets the star role in *French Without Tears*, adaption of Terry Ratigan's Criterion Theatre success. Mitchell Leisen, who made *Swing High*, *Swing Low*, will direct.

Money from Home, steeplechase comedy by Damon Runyon, is to be filmed with Shirley Ross in the lead.

Paramount and Sam Goldwyn, who have been feuding for a year or so over the services of Gary Cooper, have settled their differences. Parties have signed a pact whereby the former lets Goldwyn have director Henry Hathaway for three pictures and the latter lets Paramount have Gary Cooper for one.

Cooper's one is *Bluebeard's Eighth Wife*, Ernst Lubitsch production with Claudette Colbert. Comedy role goes to Edward Everett Horton. Gloria Swanson made the film as a silent.

Company also hopes to get Cooper for P. C. Wren's Foreign Legion story *Beau Geste*, alongside Oscar Homolka, Frances Farmer and Ray Milland. Bertram Milhauser, who scripted *Ebb Tide*, has been signed to work on the screenplay, with Lucien Hubbard producing. After *Beau Geste* comes *The Marching*



Herd, spectacular western in the *Texas Rangers* tradition.

Films on the floor include *True Confession*, Carole Lombard-Fred MacMurray starrer directed by Wesley Ruggles; *The Big Broadcast of 1938* with Martha Raye, Dorothy Lamour and Shirley Ross; and a Gladys Swarthout musical, *The Yellow Nightingale*.

M.G.M.

Currently shooting are *Mannequin*, Joan Crawford-Spencer Tracy co-starrer directed by Frank (Big City) Borzage; *Navy Blue and Gold*, story of Annapolis life with Robert Young, James Stewart, Florence Rice and Lionel Barrymore; *The Four Marys* with Myrna Loy, Franchot Tone and Rosalind Russell; and Wallace Beery's *Bad Man of Brimstone*, saga of the overthrow of lawlessness with the coming of progress to the West.

Valuable social service in the U.S. is done by *Crime Does not Pay* featurettes. Latest is *Soak the Poor*, written by an ex-G.-Man, spotlighting the abuses of public and private charities.

Today is Tonight, original yarn by Jean Harlow, has been placed on the M.G.M. production chart. Maude Fulton is scripting.

Luise Rainer is having a Sarah Bernhardt screenplay written for her by Bernhardt's own grandson-in-law, Louis Verneuil, French playwright.

ITALY

Hal Roach closed one of the biggest deals of the year when he signed an agreement to produce four operas for the screen, all to be made in Italy, financed by Italy, with Vittorio Mussolini, eldest son of Il Duce, as his partner.

Story goes that the idea of Italy financing the production of big films for world release was originally hatched by Reanto Senise, who brought it to the attention of picture-minded Mussolini. Mussolini in his turn introduced the idea to his father, who gave permission for the enterprise to proceed if an experienced producer was brought from England or America to head production. Overtures were also made to Korda, Wilcox and Wanger, who still have an open invitation to shift production activities to Rome any day they wish.

Company is to be known as Ramfilmco and plans to make four pictures to start, all operas, on which \$6,000,000 will be spent; half of the massive new plant and studios at Cinecity have been put at its disposal, with an understanding that Roach may later move out and build his own studios. Operas to be filmed will be *Rigoletto*, *Aida*, *Traviata*, and finally *Tosca*.

New regulations in Italy provide that only twice as many foreign films may be shown as Italian films—which has set exhibitors wondering whether the industry in the country can produce fast enough to keep the theatres supplied, even with the help of Ramfilmco. During the past season 41 films were produced in Italy; so according to regulations exhibitors will only be able to show those plus 82 foreign films—123 altogether. Up to now American producers alone had been sending over 150 pictures each year.

Last season's production was necessarily small because of the effect of sanctions, the burning of two big stages at Cinecity, and the great demand made on the industry's time and labour by *Condottieri* and *Scipio the African*, two large-scale pictures.

Quite a number of American films have failed to pass the Italian censor of late, for political, religious and moral reasons, and in some cases for no stated reason at all. Chaplin's *Modern Times* was exhibited in the country a couple of times and was then withdrawn from circulation, the censors refusing any explanation to United Artists. *Beloved Enemy*, *You Only Live Once*, *These Three*, *Woman Chases Man* and *The Garden of Allah* were others held up by the board.

RUSSIA

Romm—director "thirteen" on the floor at Mosfilm, Moscow, is working on a new film provisionally titled *Revolt*. Complete railway station and goodsyard has been built in the studio and look exactly like the real thing.

Moscow Chronicle Films, chief newsreel and semi-documentary organisation (Vertov works there) are building a large studio to cope with new and ambitious schemes. Need for it is also due to demands of such reportages as *Joy March* (physical culture parade in Red Square) which had 36 cameras, and the urgency of doing big jobs in a hurry such as the full history of the



Gromov Moscow-San Francisco flight which was put out complete with all American material and an entire reel covering the arrival in U.S.S.R. on the second day after the event.

COCKA

Edited by

Oh! Doctor!

Thoughts inspired by the Hollywood idea of a Medical Practitioner.

I'm disappointed in my doc.,
I rather feel he's failed me;
I don't infer
He'd ever err
In naming just what ailed me—
He does not seem so picturesque
As him we see behind a desk,
In Hollywooden dramas—
The type for whom
One sweeps one's room
And dons one's best pyjamas.

The Moving Picture Medico,
'Tis he the babies bawl for;
No need to tell
'Tis he as well
Some nifty nurse will fall for.
Yet on reflection I can see
I'd rather have my own M.D.
Who is no nurse's lover;
And would not err
(For love of her)
While stitching up my cover. . . .

And if there's one
Thing I like done
Ten miles beyond
The nearest blonde—
It's stitching up my cover.

WIT FROM THE COURTS

At Tottenham Police Court recently, a policeman told a man called as a witness to go into the box. As the man moved forward he started to take off his coat. The following scintillating exchange of wit ensued:

The P.C.: Keep your coat on.
The Man: I'm sorry; I thought you said I was to box.

Jolly comical, what? Though not more so than a *bon mot* perpetrated by my aunt, a Mrs. Dinwiddy, when she was brought up at Vine Street on a charge of maliciously tickling a car-park attendant in St. James's Square, after a reunion of old Girton Girls. When told by the magistrate to take the oath, she replied, quicker than you could say E. G. Robinson: "Oath thertainly, Mr. Judge."

This earned her a round of applause, two offers of jobs as scenario-writer and a sharp crack, *sub rosa*, from a policeman's truncheon.

CUT THIS OUT AND PEEP
THROUGH THE HOLE AT YOUR
FRIENDS

WHAT A CELL!

A craze for writing has swept over the Swieto Krzyz prison, which houses some of Poland's most notorious criminals. Novels, short stories and fairy tales are being poured out by nearly 100 enthusiastic authors.

The prison authorities, who are obliged to provide pencils and paper free, are snowed under with manuscripts. Prison rules demand that all the stories shall be censored by the authorities, and the censors are now kept working far into the night.

One or two of the convicts' literary efforts, it is stated, show considerable talent.

—News Item.

Short scena inspired by the above, showing that the pen is mightier than the penitentiary. The scene is a prison cell. The time is ten years hard.

Lefty: No, I'm not going to help you file through those bars. I'm writing my fairy story.

Butch: You and your silly old fairy story! Come on and lend a hand with this hacksaw.

Lefty: It's not a silly old fairy story. I showed it to the warder and he liked it. So there!

Butch: Pooh! You ought to be like old Strangler in the next cell and get a little meat into your stuff. The Governor had to cut his last story to hell.

(Enter a warder carrying paper and pencils and Roget's Thesaurus.)

Warder: Here you are, Lefty. I got the Razor-Slasher across the way to sharpen your pencil.

Lefty: Thanks ever so. And one other thing, warder. Do you think you could ask the boys to stop typing a little earlier in the evenings? I couldn't get a wink of sleep last night.

Warder: I'll try, but just now I've got to go down to the condemned cells and help the boys correct some proofs. I told them they should never have started on a serial. Butch, will you please stop digging that hole in the floor while I'm talking!

Lefty: Ooh, warder, you remember my telling you that I was stuck with my story and couldn't think how to get the Fairy Peaseblossom out of the Wicked Ogre's clutches?

Warder: Yeah, I remember.

Lefty: Well, I figured it out this way: this Peaseblossom doll has got a gat stuffed down her stocking and when the Ogre starts making passes at her, she gives him de woiks, see? Then she scrams down the Magic Bean—
(Continued in next column)

Come into the Kitchen

In a month loud with the clamour of war, the shrill pipings of dictators and the monotonous thud-thud of falling leaves, it was refreshing to read of the magnificent response accorded to an urgent appeal for a kitchen-maid, issued on behalf of Mr. Robert Taylor.

In fact, the issue was so heavily over-subscribed that hosts of women had to be turned away from the agency whence the appeal was sent forth. They were then able to return to their secretarial work and clerking, explaining to their bosses that there was fog on the line and you know how it holds up the trains, don't you?

There is more in this than mere mass hysteria. It demonstrates very forcibly, we think, that the spirit of service still burns with a hard bright flame in the British bosom. It reminds us, too, of those dear dead days when we were working as parlourmaid's mate in the employ of Miss Garbo.

Miss Garbo took the place in our lives that had formerly been occupied by our games-mistress. We worshipped her. Nothing was too much trouble. We would work like slaves to get a good polish on her goloshes on the rare occasions when she went out to dinner; and on more than one occasion we sat up far into the night re-stringing her hair net in readiness for the morrow.

And sometimes, when she came in from a walk in the rain, we would take her dripping oilskins from her and finger the soft fabric lovingly, perhaps pressing it to our cheeks, hot and greasy though they were from slaving over a hot stove. And there we would sit with our dreams, until an explosion in the oven reminded that there was work to do, and we would hurry away, chiding ourselves for the big, sentimental fluffs we were.

Naturally, Miss Garbo had few secrets from us, and I do not think we are betraying any confidences when we divulge that quite her most frequent visitor was a Mr. Harpo Marx. You could be quite sure that it was Mr. Marx's droshky that would be waiting at the door every night to take her to her scat-singing classes.

WHAT A CELL!—continued

stalk and hides out until the heat's off.

Butch: You gotta make her take the rap for it in the end, Lefty. Your public expects it.

Warder: Well, so long, boys. Don't forget our Literary Luncheon to-day. There'll be the usual punk speeches.

(He goes out, tripping over a rope-ladder which Butch is busy making.)

L O R U M

Rodney Hobson

DANGEROUS CURVES AHEAD

The news that Beauty Queens are to be plumper in future will come as welcome tidings to us old bucks who like our women to look like women and pass the port blast you.

In certain circles, however, the news is likely to meet with a mixed reception. Seaside Mayors and Town Councillors, upon whose shoulders falls the onerous task of checking up the measurements of our Carnival Queens, are expected to put up a spirited opposition to any alteration in the old dimensions.

"The 35-inch hip was good enough for our fathers," said the Mayor of Sweating Profuseleigh, Sussex, "and I guess we'll string along with them. You can tell the readers of your magazine that the Town Council and I mean to hold out for the 35-inch hip and no larking about. Any change in the dimensions of our British Girls can only be a retrograde step in a backwards direction."

Mr. Herbert Baggs, a member of the Dagenham Carnival Committee, said: "An inch or two here and there is neither here nor there. Our Beauty Queens must be allowed to develop along their own lines."

Snooks Grieser, whose opinion was not asked, said: "I'm in favour of bigger Beauty Queens. I like 'em curvaceous."

The larger Beauty Queen is not expected to come into operation until next season, when all those coming up for their annual Lloyds Survey will be expected to conform to the new specification. The change will necessitate drastic alterations in the standard books of reference on the subject—Hinklemeyer's *Strains and Stresses in Beauty Queens*, and Professor Waldo Droole's masterly analysis, *Ankles Aweigh*.

An interesting study is afforded by the growth of British Beauty Queens in recent years:—

Bust		4 in. increase
Calf		$\frac{1}{2}$ in. "
Ankle		$\frac{3}{4}$ in. "

Compare this with the changes in the British Film Producer over the same period:

Stomach		4 in. decrease
Neck		Unlimited
Head		Still swelling

Sayings

"It really is very annoying to find hikers, with scarcely anything on, wandering about one's garden."—*Beverley Nichols*.

"Not a single hair has been cut."—*Shirley Temple's mother*.

"I'm not a great cook, of course, but I can fix things to suit myself."—*Victor McLaglen*.

"A boy's best friend is his mutter," as the crooner said, signing a new contract.

Lump in the Throat Department

Happening to glance at our neighbour's *Daily Express* when we were in there the other day, mending a fuse for his wife, we saw the following words, glowing like precious jewels from a column dealing with that Street of Heartbreak, that Boulevard of Frayed Trousers—Wardour Street. We think they are beautiful enough to reprint here:

Two of the greatest film salesmen in the street are Maxie Thorpe, of Columbia, and Teddy Carr, of United Artists. Each is immeasurably moved at a film.

At the close of the trade show of "Lost Horizon," which Maxie was selling, he went up to a buyer and said, awed: "Boy, I didn't even know the picture was over. I was in a coma."

And when Teddy Carr saw "A Star is Born" he had a lump in his throat as big as an apple.

It does one good to read words like these, for they bear out a conviction that many of us, I think, secretly cherish. Sometimes, when the futility of things threatens to overcome me and my faith in humanity is at its lowest ebb, I have the office brougham put me down at one of those quaintly carved temples where they hold trade shows. There I stand waiting, nervously fingering my rough cloth cap, and

being jostled about more than somewhat by the gendarmes. (We know our Runyons.)

I do not think there is a more immeasurably moving sight than that offered by the boys coming out of a trade show. The majority of them are weeping unashamedly; their shoulders are shaking with the intensity of their sobs; they press tiny wisps of cambric to their streaming eyes. Many are leaning on the arm of a friend, if they can find one. And as for lumps in the throat, the boys look like a party of goitre cases holding their annual convention.

One or two of the tougher ones, of course, manage to keep their emotions under control, but their eyes are suspiciously bright and there is a catch in their voice as they ask Ernie Fredman for a loan of his handkerchief. "It's the smoky atmosphere," they say; and one turns away, for the sight of a film-salesman in the grip of a great emotion is not one to linger over. Even when the emotion loosens its grip, he doesn't look so hot.

And so I watch them drift away, to sob themselves to sleep in their garrets in Berkeley Street. Their weeping mingles with the eternal music of London and is lost...

But then, you can't grudge the boys a quiet blubber when you see some of the stuff they have to sell.



"Hope the critics will like the cocktails."

Associated British Picture

**"TWO FILMS THAT WILL DO
NOTHING BUT GOOD"**

News Chronicle

■ **CHILDREN AT SCHOOL** PRODUCED BY JOHN GRIERSON
DIRECTED BY BASIL WRIGHT

Life as it really is.

The Times

Some of the best studies of
childhood I have ever seen . . .
a wonder film. *The Star*

Brilliantly produced and direc-
ted. *Daily Film Renter*

Interesting, disturbing, infor-
mative and poetic.

The Spectator

Worthy of attention through-
out the Country. *The Cinema*

An enormously moving and
persuasive piece of film-craft.
The Observer

A remarkable film . . . jars the
social conscience. *Daily Herald*

Will strongly appeal to every-
one who sees it.

New Era

■ **THE SMOKE MENACE** PRODUCED BY JOHN GRIERSON
DIRECTED BY JOHN TAYLOR

Capable direction and first-
rate photography.

Daily Film Renter.

Considerable social value.

The Scotsman

A thoroughly interesting and
agreeable essay . . . a good
sense of the dramatic.

The Cinema

Fine film.

Daily Express

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MOVIES IN MADRID

by

Richard Watts, Jun.

IF you stand on the balcony of the twelfth floor of Madrid's embattled skyscraper, the Telefonica, and look but a few kilometres in the distance, you will see enemy territory on three sides of you. As all the world knows, the city has undergone nine months of the terrors, perils and hardships of modern warfare's refinements of beleaguerment. It has undergone weeks and months of artillery bombardment and, until the government became powerful in the air, of murderous aviation assault. Shells of every variety have rained into its streets and against its buildings. Perhaps five thousand civilians have been slain, whole districts have been razed and something like a tenth of the city has been destroyed. The Gran Via, one of the main thoroughfares of Madrid, is not far from a shambles, and the telephone building alone has been struck by exactly 117 shells. Yet the people go quietly and serenely about the business of their everyday life and seem as carefree as if their Spain was the land of song and laughter that the tourist circulars used to insist that it was.

It must be clear to the commanders of the Fascist forces that no great military purpose is served by the shelling of Madrid. The only answer, outside of attributing the artillery attacks to sheer spitefulness, is that their purpose is to break the morale of the populace. And in this it is obvious that their failure is as miserable as the Fascist failure to capture the city at the beginning of the siege, when every military authority—save General Miaja—thought that its fall was inevitable.

In fact, the whole enemy procedure has had an exactly opposite effect. It merely has made the people more stubborn and determined in their resistance. Despite everything, the population of Madrid remains approximately the one million that it was at the beginning of the war, and, for all the strain of undergoing a long and arduous siege, the people remain unshaken and unafraid, a tribute not only to the courage of the men and women of Spain, but to the dogged determination and genius for adjustment of the human spirit. Half an hour after a fierce

bombardment the people are calmly walking through the streets once more and the children are again playing unconcernedly on the sidewalks.

THEN just for excitement, the people go to the "movies" or see a very bad vaudeville show. Thirty picture theatres and sixteen of the so-called "legitimate" variety are crowded every afternoon and evening—there are no night shows, because Madrid becomes a ghost city after dark. For thrills the Madrilenos, who have been shelled the night before and have watched air battles in the clouds above them that morning, attend *The Lives of a Bengal Lancer*, or James Cagney in *G Men*. Nothing seems to entertain them more than to watch a lot of actors blazing away at one another with blank cartridges, and the scene in *Top Hat*, where Fred Astaire, in one of his dances, uses his cane as a machine gun and shoots down a male chorus, is received rapturously at every showing.

You might think that the Madrilenos went to the films for escape and would hardly enjoy pictures that dealt with a topic so close to home as, say, an air battle. Yet *The Hawk and the Eagle*, a Paramount film of perhaps four years ago, which had some pretty grim scenes of aerial combat, is a great success here, and a picture showing an air raid, wherein the actors being bombed behaved unrealistically, became a local laugh riot, with the audience calling out ironic advice to the players on the screen. Incidentally, it is rather curious to note that several German films and such an imperialistic photoplay as *Rhodes* are being shown, and that at least two child vaudeville actresses are billed as "The Spanish Shirley Temple."

TRULY Madrid did seem a ghost city when Mr. Neville, the reformed bridge expert, and I arrived at 1 o'clock in the morning, just two weeks ago. There wasn't a light in the streets save that made by the headlights of our car, and no one seemed stirring in the city save a few assault guards, armed with rifles, who patrolled the sidewalks, silently and



"They Shall not Pass"—International Sound Films

slowly. In the moonlight the amount of wreckage seemed over-emphasised and Madrid appeared as an ancient, dead city, deserted by its inhabitants centuries before. There was still some activity at the press office, however, and the bushy-haired woman in charge suggested that we stay at the Florida Hotel, since she knew there were vacant rooms there and the place was probably safe, as it had not been shelled for several days. I am grateful to her for recommending the Florida, since it is the sort of hotel Robert E. Sherwood might have thought up for a Spanish version of *Idiot's Delight*.

It certainly is in the line of fire, anyway, and when shells whistle over your head you can't be sure whether they are being fired by the besiegers or the defenders. The men who work at the hotel insist that it is one of the safest places imaginable, since the rebels can shoot at it from only two sides. Furthermore, they remind you that it has been hit only sixteen times, while the place next door has been struck 35 times. No one has yet been killed in it, although the room occupied by Sefton Delmar, the correspondent of *The London Express*, was demolished when, fortunately, he was absent.

The Florida is situated just off the favourite shelling ground of the enemy, the Gran Via, and the enemy can shell you from a couple of excellent vantage points. In fact, there is a school of thought which holds that the very existence of the hotel is a gesture of contempt toward the enemy. These people sometimes refer to the hotel as Shell Chateau, although those of us who eat there regularly prefer to think of it as Olive Oil Manor. But the horse steak is excellent and it is the only hotel in town in which you can get a hot bath, and you know how we bold Anglo-Saxons enjoy our hot baths. If we only had had a piano in the lobby the other morning we could have played the last act of *Idiot's Delight* right there.

(Courtesy, New York Herald Tribune)

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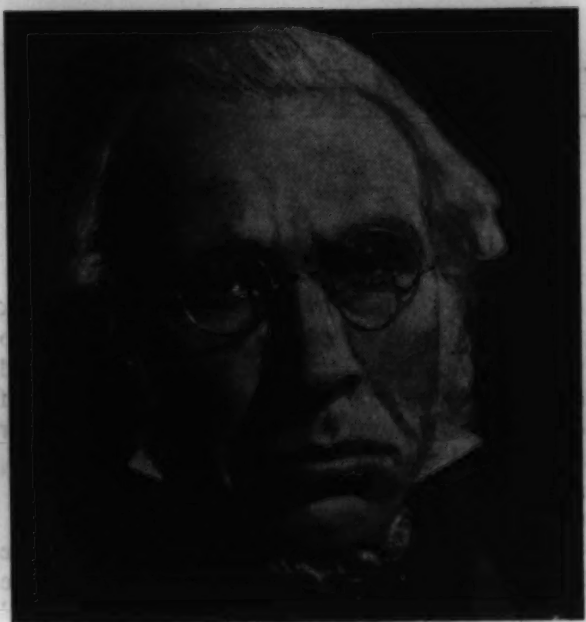
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THEATRE



William Devlin as Gladstone

A recent biographer discovered two Mr. Gladstones, one the son of the Liverpool business man, the other the Oxonian. The biographer had some excuse; he had to find some way of explaining the apparent inconsistencies of Gladstonian policy, but his example has been too generously followed. The entertainment seeker in London will have great difficulty in avoiding one of the many Mr. Gladstones on view, all of them different and none of them entirely satisfactory.

In fact, Hugh Williamson's play at the Gate Theatre, *Mr. Gladstone*, was written to right the wrong being done to the Liberal sermoniser elsewhere. Hugh Williamson makes no bones about there being more than one Gladstone, nor does he bother to attempt the reconciling of apparently irreconcilable material. His portrait is of the Gladstone whose picture still frowns down from the walls of workmen's houses in the North of England: the Gladstone who understood the art and the importance of mobilising the radicalism of the newly enfranchised masses against the older Tory and Whig politicians: the Gladstone of later years, shown as the spokesman of the masses, the defendant and exponent of liberty and democracy, the opponent of jingoism and imperialism, pictured for us in a series of incidents beginning with his entry into the Bulgarian Atrocities campaign, glimpsing his difficulties with Ireland and the Sudan and ending with his final retreat before the Big Navy politics of the new Liberalism.

The incidents are woven together by stressing the relationship between Gladstone and the Queen (who is also hard to dodge this month) contrasted in the opening, where the Queen bids an affectionate farewell to Disraeli, and the end of the play where the Queen, bidding farewell to Gladstone, makes little effort to conceal her dislike of his policy and person and her pleasure at his retirement. The Queen is shown as serving the interests of Tory imperialism and conniving with the Tory Opposition against the Liberal Government.

The play has been refused licence for public showing by the Lord Chamberlain, presumably

because of its dramatisation of the conflict between the Queen and Gladstone. Yet this conflict existed in fact, and is of historical importance to an understanding of the period, of the Queen and of Gladstone. Whether or no Mr. Williamson's Gladstone is a full and complete one, his version of the conflict with the Queen is undoubtedly close to history. That this play should be banned from the stage, whilst any infantile version of the 'glorious reign' and the 'good and gracious queen' is allowed full scope to mis-teach history, shows that the censorship is used for Party purposes as much in dealing with plays of history as it is for dealing with plays of the contemporary scene.

It is a good, workmanlike play, and Mr. William Devlin gives an adequate rendering of the Gladstone dear to the hearts of nineteenth century democracy. Miss Josephine Middleton's Queen looks a bit like Anna Neagle's at times, but is a clever piece of quiet, under-emphasis.

Still in the last century—melodrama returns to the Lyceum with *Wanted for Murder*. It is, however, a much diluted, and enfeebled melodrama. The old Lyceum plays didn't bother about probing the mind of the murderer or explaining his actions: they aimed at thrills pure and simple. *Wanted for Murder* has all the trappings—elaborate scenic effects, moving stages and, of course, a sprinkling of working class characters who drop their aitches and behave generally in the illiterate manner beloved of the Victorian stage. But the guts are gone: doubt and a slight sophistication hangs over the most dreadful deeds, blunting their effect on us. The murderer doesn't kill because he's a bloody scoundrel: he's the victim of heredity, and the causes of his actions are to be found in the text-books of psychology. So the final curtain brings us an assurance that he will not be hung, for he is insane, which must be a relief because he is acted by the best looking man in the cast and by all rights should have been the hero.

Wanted for Murder belongs to the past in one very important aspect: it moves far too slowly for these days of fast moving crime plays and of the cinema.

There are a few more 19th century relics, this time at the Queen's. Shakespearian production has speeded up considerably in the last few years, but Gielgud's *Richard II* is much too slow. The slowing down seems to be due to the littering of the stage with bits and pieces that look as though they came straight from the Gothic Revival of the 19th century, to a costuming which at times makes the stage look like a fancy dress ball, and to a seeking after processional effect which turns the play into pageant on several occasions.

Settings, decorations and processions combine to weaken what is otherwise one of the most satisfactory performances of the play for many years. It is when the verse is allowed full sway that the performance rises to greatness: Gielgud, peculiarly suited to the part, brings out the beauty and rhythm of the verse, at times overwhelming in its cadenced melancholy, as few living actors could. Michael Redgrave's Bolinbroke compares badly with Ralph Richardson's of some years

back, while Leon Quartermain speaks John of Gaunt's high-spot speech as though he were a High Churchman reciting the 23rd Psalm. Taken for all in all, this is a revival for which we must be grateful, and its success promises well for the projected series of revivals at the Queen's.

For the rest, Mr. Priestley has two competent dramas running, both spiced with the Dunne Time Theory—of these we will write more fully next month: Donald Wolfit, who began management of a Shakespearian repertory company with a week at the Wimbledon, begins a week at the King's, Hammersmith, on November 1st; whilst in the world of Vaudeville, the Windmill Theatre brings on its ninety-seventh show, with slightly better comedy than usual, much catering for the artistic worshippers of the body beautiful and impressions by Ernest Shannon, deserving notice if only because he does not impersonate either Maurice Chevalier or Mae West.

RICHARD CARR

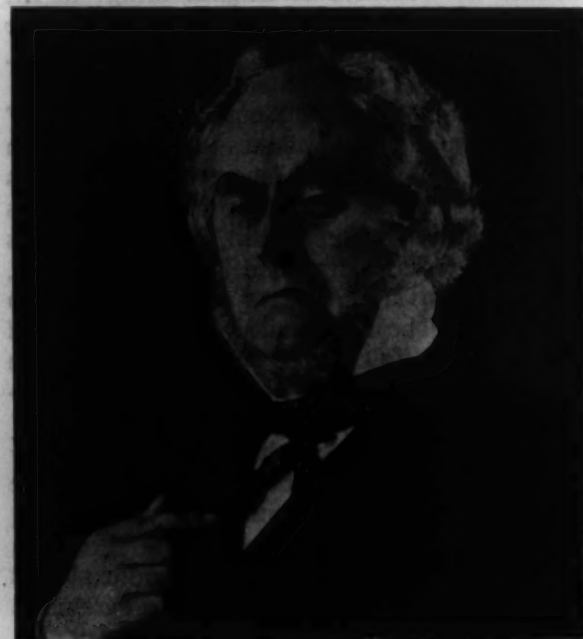
The new series of London Theatre Concerts, arranged by Betty Humby and Haigh Marshall, under the patronage of Mrs. Augustus Ralli and blessed from on high by Sir Thomas Beecham, opened on 10th October at the Cambridge Theatre. The first season is devoted to Mozart. There will be one Sunday concert each month until May. In January, Sir Thomas Beecham himself is giving an orchestral concert.

If we are to judge from the first one, these concerts will be excellent.

Mr. Haigh Marshall conducted a hand-picked orchestra in a programme which included the March in D major (K445), two piano concertos (K459, K491) Despina's arias from "*Così fan tutte*," and a Sinfonia Concertante for four solo winds.

The soloists were Cyril Smith, Nan Maryska, and Betty Humby herself, who commended the show, directed the traffic, altered the interval, changed it back again, and finished by playing the C minor piano concerto (K491) with one hand tied behind her back.

T.F.



Arthur Young in "Victoria the Great"

RADIO

AMERICAN RADIO COMMENTARY

Edited by Thomas Baird

THE American School of the Air of the Columbia Broadcasting System, returns to the air for its ninth season with an expanded programme in which the National Education Association, representing three-quarters of a million teachers and officials, takes part.

The Progressive Education Association, of some 10,000 teachers and administrators, also takes part in the development and presentation of another programme representing a new departure in subject matter of radio education.

Each school day during the term, the American School of the Air is heard over the network.

Nine separate series will run during the term. Monday has been divided into two divisions, the first "Exit and Entrances" filling the full half-hour for thirteen weeks, and the "Human Relations Forum" running half an hour, the final thirteen.

"Exits and Entrances" is the new programme sponsored by the NEA. It is devoted to dramatisation and comment on current events. Shepard Stone, assistant to the Sunday Editor of the *New York Times*, is the commentator. Mr. Stone is in Europe now making a survey of the present situation there and his first two talks will go to American listeners by short wave from London. "The Human Relations Forum" which occupies the final thirteen Mondays is the broadcast arranged in conjunction with the Progressive Education Association. It will consist of discussions among high school students.

American literature and music, designed for high school students is given on alternate Tuesdays. Dr. Louis Woodson Curtis, director of music in the public schools of Los Angeles, writes the script for the musical portions and Bernard Herrmann conducts the orchestra. The National Council of Teachers of English brings to the microphone eminent American authors. These include H. L. Mencken, Zona Gale, Robert P. T. Coffin, and Constance Skinner.

Dorothy Gordon's "Songs for Children" which occupies fifteen minutes for the first fifteen Thursdays, is followed by short wave broadcasts from foreign lands of children singing folk songs and greeting American Youth. Future broadcasts will come from Switzerland, Finland, Sweden, Esthonia, Latvia, Lithuania and Wales. Japan and China will be included if possible. A boy and girl sing native folk songs, and send greetings in their native tongues. These are translated immediately.

Dramas, interviews with youngsters recently out of high school, and expert advice comprise the vocational guidance programme.

Internationally famous scientists and explorers unite in presenting a new series of programmes over the WABC-Columbia network.

Entitled "New Horizon" the new series is given

in co-operation with the American Museum of Natural History as part of the latter's Ten Year Development Plan. "New Horizon" enlists the talents of the explorers and scientists attached to the Museum staff, plus nationally known figures. Listeners are transported from pole to pole, across deserts into jungles, deep into unexplored mountains, through the Seven Seas and back into prehistoric ages for glimpses at awe-inspiring monsters.

The following prominent scientific personalities take part: Dr. Vilhjarnar Stefansson, noted Arctic Explorer and president of the Explorers Club; Dr. Walter Granger, curator of Fossil Mammals of the Museum; Dr. Roy Chapman Andrews, famed Asiatic explorer; Dr. Harry C. Raven, gorilla expert of the Museum; Col. Theodore Roosevelt Jr., one of the world's outstanding big game hunters; Dr. Barnum Brown, currently studying dinosaur relics in Wyoming, and Dr. Harold E. Anthony, leader of the Museum's Expedition which is exploring Shiva Temple and Wotan's Throne, two of the Sky Island features in the Grand Canyon of Arizona.

The Columbia Broadcasting Systems Department of Talks have inaugurated a new series of network programmes entitled "News and Reviews" combining last minute news reports and expert analysis of current events.

A trio of commentators, H. V. Kaltenborn, Bob Trout, and Pierre Bedard combine their talents for reporting and comment.

Kaltenborn discusses and analyses foreign news of the week and Bedard reviews domestic events in a similar manner. Trout gives a résumé of the day's news events.

Bedard is director of the French Institute of New York and Secretary General of the Alliance Française. He is heard regularly in France through CBS facilities. Trout covered the Coronation for CBS and has introduced President Roosevelt on almost every occasion the President has been heard since his inauguration.

George Olsen and his famous band playing from New York's New International Casino and Cab Calloway and his orchestra broadcasting from his familiar place at the Cotton Club in Harlem, are now being heard.

Olsen's orchestra, which has been a Columbia feature for several years, has been one of America's most popular dance organisations since playing for the Broadway production of "Kid Boots" with Eddie Cantor. Olsen played his first hotel engagement at the Multnomah Hotel in Portland sixteen years ago.

Cab Calloway, son of a Rochester, N.Y., lawyer and real estate broker, began his career in music as a choir singer at a Bethlehem Methodist Episcopal Church. When his family

decided to train him for the law, he took up his studies at Chrain College in Chicago. To support himself he joined his sister in a coloured show. The career he has established for himself on those beginnings should be simple to trace for those who know the origin of Scat and Hy-De-Hi, and the true Calloway tradition.

Scientific contributions to the endless battle against crime are presented in drama form in the "Crusade Against Crime," "Gang Busters." Cases in which minute pieces of evidence prove to be the deciding factor in "breaking" the crime, are the subjects.

Ordinarily "Gang Busters" re-enacts the activities of some notorious criminal, but the new evils bring to the attention of the radio audience cases showing the futility of even the most carefully planned crimes when science is drawn into the solution of the case.

In one of the cases—a murder—scientists determine that a bullet had passed through a woman's breast before entering the body of the victim. One case hinged on the imprint of a trouser leg on the window sill, which when photographed and enlarged was found to match the weave in the cloth of a pair of trousers owned by suspect. In a third case, a letter written with six words to each line, an occupational trait of telegraphers, led to the solution of a major crime.

"The Fall of the City"

The first of a series of experiments in radio drama was transmitted on the National Programme on Thursday, October 7th. The play chosen was "The Fall of the City" by Alexander McLeish. This work was first broadcast by the Columbia Broadcasting System, and directed by Irving Reis. Other experimental programmes will be given by the B.B.C. at regular intervals.

We had expected that the B.B.C. would tell us what the experiment was to be. But no, the play was presented as any other play would have been and with no more introduction. We were left to pursue internal evidence to discover the experimental qualities; and there was very little evidence. There was very little reason to label the play experimental. It obeys all the classical conventions; it has the unities of time, space and action: it has messengers to report off-stage action and confidential dialogue to interpret the movement of the play. It is not a radio play at all.

Within these limits the production of Peter Cresswell was extremely competent and his actors played up with fine inflection and precise timing. But again neither of these elements is peculiarly experimental. We have had good acting and speaking and good production from the B.B.C. in the past.

RADIO

Notes of the Month

By George Audit

("The Fall of the City." Contd.)

We had the good fortune recently to hear some of the productions of the Columbia Workshop. We also heard Mr. Irving Reis expound his theories and explain why *The Fall of the City* is experimental. Reis's conception of experiment is technical. He made *The Fall of the City*, with all its formalism, jump alive because he engineered the job superbly well. He gave to the market place a magnificent perspective. The voices spoke in beautiful spatial relations. His crowd might well have been one of millions. Their shout was terrific yet, by clearing special frequency channels in his crowd noise, his fore-ground actors remained articulate.

Reis told us he used an armoury 300 yards long to house a crowd of some 200. He recorded the crowd noise and played this back on six loud speakers behind the real crowd. He had a time-lag on each recorded crowd which gave the impression of a vast congregation slanting in perspective back towards the horizon. His characters spoke under different acoustical conditions and thus sounded in perspective.

All this may seem unnecessarily complicated, but such a treatment is the only justification for labelling *The Fall of the City* as experimental. If the B.B.C. had been attempting any such aerial acrobatics they should have told us. The subject-matter falls into two parts. The first illustrates the power of oratory, the persuasion of the public will. The theme is the idea of freedom and liberty. It is very reminiscent of *Julius Caesar*. The second half of the play illustrates that the public cannot sustain the power of its will and readily yields to a master: if there is no master to hand they make one.

The only experiment we can think of is that of borrowing from a distinguished school of radio production. But the B.B.C. had done this before. Some months ago it produced *Meridian-7-1212*. This is an experimental drama written by Irving Reis. It has witty, well-written dialogue: but in this it is not unique. As produced by the Columbia Workshop its virtue was in its technical presentation.

When the B.B.C. produced the play all the subtlety of production technique disappeared and we were left with a drama whose wit lay right outside the native genius of the producers.

The most revealing experiment that the B.B.C. could give us, if they wish to show us what lies on the fringe of radio, would be to play the recording of Reis's production on the same programme with a recording of the B.B.C. production, and at the same time tell us what the experiment is.

YOU may smile, you may be surprised or informed, but you will seldom get a thrill out of your wireless set. In fact it is one of the most difficult things to produce a thrill in radio. In the cinema or at the theatre it is much easier, because your audience is sitting in an unfamiliar place with subdued lights and they see the events happening with their own eyes which they are always more ready to believe than their ears.

But with the radio you sit in your home. In nine cases out of ten you switch the set on to hear the news or the racing results and you leave it running while you read the paper or eat your supper because you find a little soft music more pleasant as a background than the sounds of the people quarrelling next door and the kids letting off fireworks in the street. Another thing is that family differences always express themselves in terms of radio preferences. If the husband likes the wireless on all the time his wife will generally take to disliking it altogether and will rattle the dishes, slam the doors and tramp on the floor upstairs without any respect for the listener. If the mother likes to hear soft voices and religious music the chances are the son will surreptitiously switch over to his favourite military band. And just when a truce has been declared and the family circle has gathered round to hear a special item a caller will break in to announce some petty scandal or other.

With all these distractions the radio producer has to contend. He has few advantages over the film producer. It is true that he is not confined by Aristotle's unities of time and place but the B.B.C. have made little use of this new freedom. Imagine, for instance, the possibilities in a programme on Spain. With actual recordings of scenes in the battle area and in the cities you could montage voices of the past, of Cervantes, George Borrow, etc., and the speeches and counsels of both camps might be interchanged and contrasted with their achievements. Of course one is not so optimistic as to expect that sort of thing from the B.B.C., but the potentialities are there.

It is often said that broadcasting lends itself to fantasy and horror more easily than any other medium. I do not altogether share this view. I have yet to hear anything on the wireless as terrifying as *Dr. Mabuse* or more fantastic than *The New Gulliver*. The probability is that radio cannot evoke from its audience such extremes of emotion. Its quality is intimacy. It lends itself to suggestion and subtle excitements. I remember the extraordinary effect produced on me by the broadcast of Walter de la Mare's "Yes and Back Again." It was a kind of eerie actuality. And the whole production was so simple, with a few quiet, unusual voices and occasional music. The same emotional restraint was exercised in the

"Gallipoli" programme. Here the most stirring scenes were recalled by quiet readings from diaries, memoirs and private letters. And all this brings me back to my original point that radio is not a good medium for the thriller.

In the October issue of "Ariel" (the B.B.C. Staff Magazine), Mr. D. G. Bridson has written a "Plea for Shockers." He pleads "for the gunshots in the darkened room of the cinema, for gallops along cliff edges of suburban lassitude, for dying horses and heroes in the desert of daily life. If radio made a point of broadcasting only such programmes as could be known in advance as capable of shocking—either to laughter, to fear, to anger, to exasperation, to tears, or even to blushes—it would be doing something which it is not always doing to-day."

Coming from a B.B.C. producer these last sentiments are most commendable, but what are their chances of application? Mr. Bridson would probably agree that *The Thin Man* and the recent Paramount newsreel on China were good "shockers" within his definition. But what evidence does he produce that the same thing can be done in radio? Only as an example of method, not of effect, does he mention his own programme, "Steel." Now in the opinion of a good many competent critics "Steel" was a failure because it was overloaded with poetic description. His earlier production, "The March of the '45" was a roaring success because his strong sense of rhythm and his use of descriptive verse were admirably suited to convey the action and movement of his story. Mr. Bridson would not use this poetic method for his Harry Hopeful programmes. Why does he want to use it to describe a steel foundry? He says in his article "What is vitally and fore-eminently necessary is that the listener should be made to feel the same emotions listening to a description of metal boiling at white heat that he would feel if he could actually see it. And those emotions cannot be inspired by a bare description of iron ore in an open-hearth furnace. They can be inspired only by an analogy—by giving him, in simile, a description of something akin to it that arouses his pity, or his sadism, or his terror." Excellent, but Mr. Bridson created such feelings only in spots and then in spite of his outpourings of blank verse.

I only disagree with Mr. Bridson's choice of method. I would suggest that he is putting obstacles in his way if he thinks that he can mix up wild-west gunmen, actuality, poetic description and historical features indiscriminately. Radio will not render wild excitement, terror, laughter or fear as readily as the film (and probably television). It can inspire emotions none the less profound but it must go to work a different way. It may not cause the listener to leap out of his chair but it may make him refuse to leave it.

LETTERS

Soviet Films Controversy

Having recently revisited the Soviet Union I wish, unfortunately rather late in the day, to comment on the two controversial articles on the Soviet cinema written last year for *W.F.N.* by H. V. Merowitz and Cedric Belfrage. Both writers after visiting Russia for the first time were of the opinion that the cinema had "gone Hollywood." Unfortunately both of them assumed that their readers were familiar with the complicated discussions on questions of Soviet subject and form in art which are summed up in the opposing ideas of "formalism" and "socialist realism." The latter is the official point of view which has caused a complete change in the style of Soviet art.

I feel that foreigners, being observers rather than participants of the changes in Soviet ideas, imagine more often than not that they understand the causes and share identical feelings with the participants. However the meaning of "formalism" and "socialist realism" seems to me to be this. That "formalism" is any intellectual symbolical or artistic interpretation which the average person may not comprehend. "Socialist Realism" on the other hand, is an idea and a method of presentation which is still in the "melting pot." It is, as I understand it at this moment, an endeavour to produce all works of art in a lifelike manner which is officially considered likely to be fully comprehensible to the average person in the Soviet state who has lived through, or grown up, traversing the period of military communism to Stalin's constitution. Neither Mr. Merowitz, Mr. Belfrage nor myself have been involved in such changes, and, therefore, we can only *theoretically imagine what we ourselves should want in art* after twenty years spent in abnormal conditions of life and a revolution of the economic system. We too easily transfer our tastes and prejudices on to the Russian people, and become indignant if their ideas about art are not what we expect them to be.

I saw only three of the most important new films. In none of them were there the camera angles similar to the photographic composition of the early films, no examples of "Russian montage," nor a hint of former "typage." Nevertheless all three pictures were well acted by professionals, were competently handled by young directors,

and they interested me because I knew something of the subjects they were dealing with.

Peter the First, directed by V. Petrov, presents Peter the Great as a progressive Tzar who introduced European ideas and methods, particularly those of British shipbuilding, to Russia. If his individual brutality is somewhat modified, the film as a whole is not a namby-pamby picture of the 18th century. The style is pictorially effective, the battle scenes reminding one of a succession of enormous oil paintings.

In contrast to this epic is the psychological study directed by two young directors, Heffitz and Zharki, *Deputy of the Baltic*. It deals with the psychological struggle every intellectual, and in this case scientist, had to face when Kerensky's Government was overthrown. The old scientist is so naturally portrayed, and the details of the academic milieu so carefully observed that this film is probably the most valuable document of the Russian academic world during the first period of the Revolution.

Another kind of historical document is constructed by Kusnetsov and Trauberg in the second film of their trilogy on the life of an old Bolshevik, *The Return of Maxim*. The film commences prior to the Great War and traces Maxim's life and his revolutionary work up to the outbreak of war. The most impressive scenes because of their feeling of authenticity are those showing the everyday life among the Petrograd workers and the unpremeditated street battle.

I have the impression that the cinema is endeavouring to show how average people behave towards one another when they are not delivering speeches nor fighting battles.

Frankly I miss the camera angles, the explosive editing, the extraordinary types; but I realise that the whole foreign audience for Soviet films is nothing but a drop in the ocean of Soviet spectators, who, I really do not believe have any longer a taste for technical experiments in the cinema if they ever had. I say *if they ever had* because I am now rather doubtful if the great Russian films ever interested the average Soviet audience except as an illustration of recent events. I doubt if the Russians who saw these films as a new art are numerically larger than the people who appreciate their genius abroad. It is an interesting fact that even in England working-class audiences complain that the symbolism in many of the early Soviet

films is difficult for them to grasp; how much more difficult must it be for workers and peasants in Russia many of whom a few years ago could neither read nor write. One is therefore forced to feel that the great directors who we have thought of as *typical* Soviet artists are actually exceptions, standing in relation to their audience somewhat in the same position as those geniuses of the past who lifted the simplest theme on to an abstract plane. Obviously such art will not be sponsored in a state where the demands of the majority are considered to be of greater importance than the desires of the exceptional minority.

MARIE SETON

Circulation Crushes Criticism

Those people like Leslie Withers, who are fighting an uphill battle on the critical front, may well demand an organised resistance by journalists against those sections of the Trade which resent adverse criticism to the point of sabotage. They might also, in so doing, note one significant fact. Resentment rises in strict proportion to circulation. When a critic slammed several expensive productions in a Sunday paper there was a concerted move by the Trade to make sure it should never happen again. The Trade withdrew, or threatened to withdraw, their advertising. This paper has a very large circulation.

But, curiously enough, a critic can, with complete impunity, slam films in those papers, the circulation of which is relatively small.

Withers & Co. may draw their own conclusions from this. The rest of us must face the bitter fact that the Trade does not think it worth while to recognise these writers who, on a meagre pittance which would make Paul Holt guffaw, sweat out their weekly articles for a paper with only 20,000 readers, in a sincere attempt to deal with the more important films, on a basis which would at least not earn the downright censure of say a Matthew Arnold.

Maybe, in the long run, the trade is wrong. Much of Ossian's (and Macpherson's) reputation rests on the vituperation of Samuel Johnson. A thousand fan columns may easily be wrong against the less easily taken criticism of a Seldes or a Graham Greene.

JUST ANOTHER CRITIC

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NEWSREEL RUSHES

NEWSREEL NOTES

BY THE COMMENTATOR

ITEM, TO TRY AGAIN. The new newsreel—*National News*—was born on the morning of October 11th. The first issue had been nearly six months in preparation. It was edited by a man with thirteen years of newsreel experience (see *W.F.N.* for October). It had a star B.B.C. name as a commentator. It promised unusual and interesting features—for the first time in any newsreel a regular section in colour—another regular section of “news behind the headlines” in the style of *The March of Time*. All round, it looked a winner. It was born on the morning of October 11th. On the afternoon of October 13th it was dead of a broken heart. Its first issue had been hurriedly withdrawn from all cinemas where it was showing—production of future issues was postponed. Behind that news lay the most dramatic misfire of modern newsreel history.

TERRIBLY DISAPPOINTING was the almost unanimous verdict of the privileged few thousands who saw the first reel during the two days that it was showing. Led by the critics, a howling chorus of disapproval rose from every quarter. Amazing seemed the fact, that after six months' work by men who had earned the right to be classed as experts in their respective fields, the finished product could possibly be so slipshod, so unimaginative, so lacking in news and entertainment value. With the screams of birth so quickly hushed by the strains of burial, little purpose can be served by a detailed post mortem. But the sooner *National News* Editor, Cecil Snape, and his assistants realise the general fundamental causes of their failure, the sooner will they stand a fair chance of producing a reel with any hope of competing in a field of fierce competition.

IDEAS ON PAPER can easily be made to look attractive. In any art—and modern film production is certainly that—the real test of ability comes in the translation of the ideas into a practical form. On paper it looked good to include colour as a regular part of the make-up of *National News*. In practice, judging by the first story, the system of colour photography chosen does not give good enough results. Through the big colour feature films, through past newsreel efforts in Technicolor and Dufaycolor, cinemagoers have been schooled to expect a certain standard of colour reproduction. They will not be satisfied with anything far below that standard. Neither will they be satisfied with non-topical news just because it's in colour. From this point of view, the choice of an army mannequin parade of uniforms, which might have been shot months ago, for the first colour story, was another bad start.

ON PAPER it looked good to cash in on the publicity value of commentator Tom Woodroffe, hero of the B.B.C.'s “all lit up” incident. In practice Woodroffe failed completely in adapting his radio technique to the lighter, more concentrated newsreel style. On paper it looked good to follow American reels in putting the commentator on the screen. In practice Woodroffe showed himself

a hopeless screen actor. On paper it looked good to imitate *The March of Time* in presenting a bi-weekly “Behind the Headlines” feature story. In practice Editor Snape failed completely to achieve even a faint impression of the American monthly's combination of clarity with lightning speed; its carefully planned distribution of the story-telling between picture, commentary, and music; its spice of controversy. Without any of those features, *National News* story about British agriculture was just plain dull!

A FRESH START for *National News* is promised within a few weeks, may even be an accomplished fact before this issue of *W.F.N.* reaches subscribers. But unless those responsible for financing the new venture, those responsible for turning the finance into edited celluloid, adopt a more

OWING TO LACK OF SPACE GLEN
NORRIS'S NEXT OPEN LETTER—
TO THE EDITOR OF UNIVERSAL
TALKING NEWS—IS HELD OVER
TO DECEMBER

courageous, more far-seeing policy, they might as well give up now. For nowadays every cinemagoer is a severe critic. He will not accept anything even slightly below the standard he has come to expect. He doesn't want colour unless its good colour. A big-game radio commentator is useless unless he is also a good newsreel commentator. Who cares about news behind the headlines unless the story is presented from an interesting or entertaining angle? Few competent observers will deny that there is a place for a finely edited newsreel in Britain. Whether *National News* can fill that place remains to be seen.

PARAMOUNT ON HIGH! In *W.F.N.* for August, Glen Norris, in an open letter to its editor, G. T. Cummins, reasoned for a bolder, “snappier” Paramount newsreel. It may be just a coincidence, but no more definite or striking answer to Glen Norris's plea could well have been imagined, than that provided in recent Paramount issues. Apart

from making world headlines by putting out, in company with Universal, the full uncensored pictures of the Shanghai bombing horror (see *W.F.N.* for October), Paramount have scored a series of aces with “straight to the point” stories which minced neither word nor picture. There was a speech by Professor Hilton which discussed in serio-comic vein the advantages of “wearing an old school tie in business.” Included in the story was a good natured slap at the B.B.C. public school attitude which made audiences gasp, then roar. There was a story about a North of England village being demolished under a slum clearance scheme, which combined with extraordinary effect a light treatment of the subject with a faintly rumbling undertone of the whole explosive question of rehousing. But above all there was the scoop which brought to the newscreens the pictures of the month.

SCOOP! With so much advance publicity, none of the reels could possibly make the excuse that they didn't know that Sir Oswald Mosley was again taking his fascists down to London's East End, on Sunday, October 10th. None of the reels would dare to suggest that they didn't expect trouble. Yet apparently only Paramount sent their cameramen out to cover the story. The result had all the thrill and excitement of a prize fight. After one or two opening shots, the marchers are completely forgotten; the camera focuses on a series of lightning skirmishes between police and bystanders. Wherever the pictures were shown, political partisanship was forgotten in the shouts of approval as “Bobbies” laid about with lefts and rights; as they marched off rioters who held broken teeth in place; as they carried off others kicking and writhing. Everywhere, cinemagoers agreed that for sheer entertainment the story had set a new level in newsreel reporting; that if this were a measure of the success of Paramount's new policy of free discussion then Paramount was heading for the heights!

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PEOPLE WITH PURPOSES

NEWS NOTES

G.B.I.'s production year comes to an end this month, and they start off again with their new schedule in November. Each year it is their aim to put out 50 films and this year that number has been greatly exceeded. Twelve new films from the Secrets of Life series are being completed for both theatrical and non-theatrical distribution. Four biology films and four films on the different aspects of the Coal Industry form an important part of their programme. Six films of the Health and Strength series made under the supervision of the National Advisory Council of Physical Fitness are now ready. *Hereford Herd*, a documentary by Mary Field, on beef, is also included. In addition G.B.I. are making 6 short feature films with religious themes, the first from a story by Tolstoi is already completed, and three more, *Where Love Is, As we Forgive*, and *The Unseen Power*, will shortly be released.

The Realist Film Unit's *Children at School* produced by John Grierson, was shown to the Press on October 5th, and great interest has been displayed by all sections in this very important film. Educational authorities have also expressed their keen satisfaction at the way this social problem has been treated in the film.

Future productions include one on Scotland showing its present condition in the industrial, agricultural, and social fields, and one on painting in colour.

Modern Orphans of the Storm, a film dealing with Refugee Basque Children and produced by the Realist Film Unit in conjunction with Victor Saville Productions, is now nearing completion. The commentary for the film is spoken by E. V. H. Emmett, whose voice is so well-known in the Gaumont-British News and in the popular *Secrets of Life* Series.

Children at School and *Smoke Menace* went to America on October 13th for inclusion in Paul Rotha's programmes of British documentaries.

The display section of the G.P.O. Film Unit are giving an exhibition devoted to Scotland, which is the result of months of photography and research in the country, at the Glasgow Exhibition in May, 1938. Five wall panels are in hand for the interior of the Post Office in the Exhibition grounds. Four of the films in production have a Scottish reference. A one-reeler, *North of the Border*, shows the working of the newly separated Scottish Postal Region. *The Copper Web*, a film of the switch over from overhead wires to underground cables, was shot in Scotland. The Savings Bank are also putting out a film on their work in Scotland. Finally, *S.O.S.* the ship-shore radio film, has been re-scripted in an Aberdeen setting and is under way under the production of Cavalcanti and Harry Watt.

A Programme of American Documentaries was given by the English-Speaking Union at Dartmouth House on October 7th and 21st. The films shown were *Work Pays America*, *Fortyninth Spate*, *T.V.A. Authorities at Work*, and *Rain for the Earth*. Lord Strabolgi presided and the

principal speaker was Mr. Richard de Roche-mont, chief of the March of Time.



Victor Stoloff with native actor

Victor Stoloff and James Hamilton Black, of James Hamilton Productions, are over from Egypt, where they have just completed their first film in partnership. Both have lived for many years in Egypt, and experience in folk-lore work was gained in two trial films, *Egyptian Pastoral* and *Arab Fantasia*.

The object of this company is to present documentary films based on Egyptian folklore and to make studies of the various aspects of Egyptian native life and to illustrate the customs and characters of the people. A story will be introduced in each film.

Their first film is entitled *Sails on the Nile* and is a study of Nile boatmen, whose mode of life has preserved its primitive nature and rhythm. In November they are returning to Egypt to start their new production schedule. Among the films to be made are *The Legend of the Earth*, showing the life of an Egyptian peasant attracted by the city; *The Oasis of Siwa* and *Egypt Gift of the Nile*, showing the Nile as a vital element of Egypt. They plan to have all their films processed and recorded in England, and will return here in March to start editing.

The Travel Association Film Unit have now nearly completed *London on Parade*; among the films being prepared for South America are *Heart of an Empire*, *Industrial Britain*, *Key to Scotland*, *Around the Village Green*, and *So this is Lancashire*.

Edgar Anstey, Production Director for The March of Time Ltd., left London in early October to spend several months in the New York offices of the company. Mr. Anstey has been with the British March of Time unit for over a year and has to his credit the direction of *Britain*, *Empire and Coronation*, *Food or Physical Training*, *Black Areas* and *Scotland's Highland Problems*.

During his stay in America Mr. Anstey will be called upon to take part in the production of several American items of international interest, with the idea of bringing to them an expression of the British point of view.

Following the formation of Sound-Services Ltd. and the association of that company with Publicity Films Ltd., comes yet another development of this group. This is the formation of a third company, Merton Park Studios Ltd., which will manage the studios at Wimbledon, formerly operated by Publicity Films Ltd., together with the Scenario and Production staffs.

More than twenty pictures are scheduled for immediate production by this group.

Among them is the National Savings Committee's new film which deals with the saving of a village green threatened by the jerry-builders. One unit has been at work on location for some time at Benenden under Ralph Smart who is directing from a script by Terence Egan. This picture will put on the screen for the first time documentary treatment of a village green cricket match.

The Automobile Association have placed with Sound-Services Ltd. a contract for the production of a publicity film, and this is now in production at Merton Park. This film has a humorous story emphasising the chief points of the A.A. service to motorists. Ralph Smart is directing.

Other films going into distribution from this studio include *Land of the Four Kings* (colour-travelogue advertising Cow and Gate Food), *Black Diamonds* (documentary sponsored by National Benzole), *Hoarse Sense* (colour cartoon about Zubes) and *Wee Blue Blossom* (documentary of the work of the Irish Linen Guild).

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FABER & FABER

"CHILDREN at SCHOOL"

Each year since 1935 the Gas Industry has sponsored a documentary film dealing with a contemporary social problem. Their first piece of social criticism was the now famous *Housing Problems*, a survey of working class housing conditions. In 1936 they tackled the problem of nutrition in *Enough to Eat?* known non-theatrically as *The Nutrition Film*.

These two films have been followed this year by *Children at School*, an analysis of the public education system of England.

The film opens with a pleasant and informative statement of the progressive education ideal. We see the children in the new schools working under the Dalton and Montessori plans. We see the play theory at work in the nursery schools. New buildings allow sunshine and fresh air to pour into spacious classrooms. The simple disciplines of living are assimilated as part of the normal deportment of the school life. There are places to keep things and the children learn to keep things in place. There are facilities for washing, and the children acquire a facility for keeping clean. There is time for peace and quiet and rest and the children learn the virtue of these. There are playing grounds where children can learn to play and it is a fact that many children coming from city areas need to be taught to play.

But there is another side to the story. This glowing picture of new ideals is functioning in only a restricted sector of the educational field. Buildings are old. Many are insanitary. Many are cold. Many are damp. All this the film shows. Teachers anxious to adopt the newer ideas are defeated by the out-of-date buildings. The new curriculum presupposes space, light, fresh air and quietness. Many schools cannot provide these essentials. Classes of fifty and sixty children forbid the new discipline of free movement. Ill-lighted rooms forbid work for hand and eye.

The film makes the case for reform with a reserved and objective statement of the facts. It takes its chief power from Basil Wright's telling observation. The sure eye of his camera sees for us; his direction makes the observation significant. The production of John Grierson gives this statement of the school's inefficiency, its full sociological reference; it is shown as a problem demanding a democratic solution. New, efficient schools must be built.

Kensal House is Frank Sainsbury's report of the gas industry's experiment in housing. It shows the process of slum clearance and the opportunity of clean and healthy living in modern workers' flats.

Domestic science is catered for in this year's gas films by *How to Cook*, the new Boulestin film by Elton and Holmes, and *Pots and Pans*, a demonstration in kitchen planning from the same directors. *Daisy Bell Comes to Town* by Legg and Holmes with the Griffith Brothers of Pantomime fame as the front and hind legs of Dazy Bell, deals with milk cookery. *Two Frightened Ladies*, a Publicity Films Production by Ralph Smart, is this year's Mr. Therm comedy.



I SHOT IN CORNWALL

AFTER smelling most of the fish markets of Britain, I found myself in Mousehole, Cornwall. It was raining when I arrived, so the pub appeared the best place to meet the locals. I soon got into conversation with the only other customer. After we'd talked about the fishing, politics, French crabbers, broccoli, the fishing, dogs, visitors, sanitation, and the fishing, I remembered my official capacity and announced solemnly that I must call on the postmaster. "I am the postmaster," my companion replied equally solemnly. So I decided to make the film in Mousehole.

We went down in May and started testing for the cast. During our week of testing the sun shone brilliantly. As this was practically the only week in which it shone at all, our tests were very good. We cast the postmaster as the hero. His test was to walk up to the camera and say something. He walked up, and looking to the hills said, "Well, if that isn't old Kingsley Wood up there, gathering mushrooms. How are you, Kingsley, old man?" So we made him the hero.

The other parts were more difficult. One woman backed out at the last moment, because her aunt in the Salvation Army disapproved. Another kept stopping in the middle of shots and turning to the camera with, "This is funny, isn't it?" You can imagine our reply.

But we eventually got started. As we had said good-bye to the sun, Mousehole soon realised that films were made by sitting on reflectors in doorways and playing pontoon. Another difficulty was that whenever the sun did come out, the women in the cast had to go home to cook their men's dinners and the hero had to deliver the letters. And unless you dogged them carefully they very often forgot to come back.

One big day was when we hired a boat and went out to get a fishing sequence. We shot our lines and waited in brilliant sun for the fish to get caught. As soon as we started to haul the lines a fog came up. We found our-

selves with large quantities of conger eels and no sun. So we decided on an ambitious re-enactment. We would keep the eels alive and re-attach them to the lines next day. We tore home, roused out the carpenter, built a huge box, inserted the eels and tried to sink it in the harbour. Being wood, it refused to sink. Ballast was the cry. In an excess of zeal, someone seized a 56-lb. weight and flung it into the box. The bottom promptly fell out and the eels swam away.

We decided to do the interiors on the spot. So we looked around and found an old cottage in process of being demolished to make way for a public convenience. We approached the Town Council and suggested that Mousehole had done very well without a public convenience for 500 years, so could they wait another month? They saw our point and let us have the cottage. The local grocer lent us all the bad sweets he had in his cellar for a shop scene. Unfortunately, we didn't know they were bad sweets until one of the characters, after five takes of a sweet-eating shot, asked plaintively, "If it wouldn't be just as good if he ate an apple."

But despite vicissitudes, we got the film finished. Not one of the characters had ever acted before. And after a slow start we found that they could act the average actor off the screen. On returning, I had occasion to get some small part players from an agency. I then discovered that the qualifications for being a film actor in London were to look like a cheese, have served in some obscure Empire police-force, and speak all lines in an imaginary Oxford monotone.

In Bill Blewett, of Mousehole, we found a natural actor whose sense of timing and atmosphere was uncanny. He is certainly one of the foremost film actors of Britain to-day. But of course, he hasn't been to the Academy of Dramatic Art. And he doesn't know any dukes. So I don't suppose anyone will do anything more about it.

Harry Watt

FILM GUIDE

Shorts

All Baba and the Forty Thieves (Puppets in Gaspar-colour).

DISTRIBUTION: A.B.F.D.

PRODUCTION: Slatinay and George Pal.

BAKEWELL: Picture House	Nov. 15, 3 days
BRADFORD: Elysian	Nov. 4, 3 days
CHURCH: Queens	Nov. 25, 3 days
HOUNSLOW: Dominion	Nov. 1, 6 days
HEATH HAYES: Picture House	Nov. 22, 3 days
HALESWORTH: Cinema	Nov. 25, 3 days
KIRKCALDY: Carlton	Nov. 4, 3 days
MANCHESTER: Riviera, Cheetham Hill	Nov. 8, 6 days
MARLBORO: Cinema	Nov. 4, 3 days
MURTON: Olympia	Nov. 29, 3 days
STH. QUEENSFERRY: Daybells Cinema	Nov. 12, 2 days
SHIREBROOK: Empire	Nov. 18, 3 days
SANDGATE: Picture House	Nov. 22, 3 days
STANTON HILL: Cinema	Nov. 25, 3 days
THROCKLEY: Lyric	Nov. 11, 3 days
WEYMOUTH: Odeon	Nov. 29, 3 days
WREXHAM: Odeon	Nov. 25, 3 days

Beside the Seaside (Documentary of South Coast resorts).

DISTRIBUTION: Kinograph.

DIRECTION: Marion Grierson.

EASTBOURNE: Winter Gardens Cinema Nov. 4, 3 days

Cable Ship (The G.P.O. Cable Ships at work in the Channel).

DISTRIBUTION: A.B.F.D.

PRODUCTION: John Grierson for G.P.O. Film Unit.

DIRECTION: Stuart Legg.

LONDON: News Theatre, Waterloo Nov. 1, 3 days

Calendar of the Year

DISTRIBUTION: A.B.F.D.

DIRECTION: Evelyn Spice.

MANCHESTER: Tatler Nov. 29, 6 days

Coal Face (Poetic treatment of coal mining).

DISTRIBUTION: A.B.F.D.

PRODUCTION: John Grierson for G.P.O. Film Unit.

SOUND PRODUCTION: Alberto Cavalcanti.

EXETER: Empire Nov. 14, 1 day

Cover to Cover (Documentary of book production).

DISTRIBUTION: A.B.F.D.

PRODUCTION: Strand Films.

DIRECTION: Alexander Shaw

ACCRINGTON: King's	Nov. 1, 3 days
BIGGAR: Cinema	Nov. 1, 1 day
BATH: News Theatre	Nov. 8, 3 days
BAKEWELL: Picture House	Nov. 15, 3 days
CARLISLE: Star	Nov. 18, 3 days
DALTON-IN-FURNESS: Co-operative	Nov. 19, 2 days
GOOLE: Tower	Nov. 1, 3 days
HAZEL GROVE: Marcliff	Nov. 29, 3 days
HARROGATE: Royal Hall	Nov. 11, 3 days
JACKSDALE: Palace	Nov. 25, 3 days
KNUTSFORD: Marcliff	Nov. 25, 3 days
MARKET HARBOUR: Oriental	Nov. 8, 3 days
MURTON: Empire	Nov. 11, 3 days
MALVERN: Theatre	Nov. 18, 3 days
NEW SILKSWORTH: Hippodrome	Nov. 25, 3 days
NEWTON HEATH: Pavilion	Nov. 1, 3 days
QUEENSBURY: Victoria	Nov. 4, 3 days
SOUTHWELL: Ideal	Nov. 11, 3 days
UTTOXETER: Elite	Nov. 4, 3 days

Fishing on the Banks of Skye.

DISTRIBUTION: A.B.F.D.

PRODUCTION: John Grierson for G.P.O. Film Unit.

BAGSHOT: Princes

LONDON: News Theatre, Waterloo Nov. 8, 3 days

For All Eternity (A film of English cathedrals).

DISTRIBUTION: M.G.M.

PRODUCTION: Strand Films

DIRECTION: Marion Grierson

COGGESHALL: Kinema	Nov. 1, 3 days
GOLDBOURNE: Royal Pavilion	Nov. 29, 2 days

GILESGATE MOOR: Crescent

MANNINGTREE: Plaza

SEATON: Regal

Nov. 3, 2 days

Nov. 29, 3 days

Nov. 3, 3 days

Forbidden Frontier (Political situation between Poland and Lithuania).

DISTRIBUTION: Kinograph

PRODUCTION: World Window Productions

SUPERVISION: Sir Philip Gibbs

DARLINGTON: Alhambra

LONDON: Monseigneur, Leicester Sq.

Monseigneur, Piccadilly

Monseigneur, Trafalgar Sq.

Monseigneur, Strand

News Theatre, Victoria

NORTHAMPTON: Exchange

Nov. 15, 3 days

Nov. 8, 3 days

Nov. 8, 3 days

Nov. 11, 3 days

Nov. 11, 3 days

Nov. 18, 3 days

Nov. 29, 6 days

Gentlemen in Top Hats and Gentlemen in Crowns (Historical survey of European events for the past 40 years).

DISTRIBUTION: Kinograph

PRODUCTION: A. B. Svensk Filmindustri

ENGLISH VERSION: Donald Taylor

POYNTON: Cinema

Nov. 8, 3 days

Grey Seal (Its life and habits).

DISTRIBUTION: A.B.F.D.

DIRECTION: John Mathias, Cyril Jenkins.

MANCHESTER: Tatler

Nov. 1, 6 days

EDUCATIONAL FILM PROGRAMMES

at the Tatler Theatre,

Charing Cross Road.

Saturday mornings, 12 noon to 1 o'clock.

Nov. 6th. **Physical Geography.**

Nov. 13th. **Public Services.**

Nov. 20th. **Ecology.**

Nov. 27th. **Winter Games and Physical Education.**

Further details from G.B. Instructional Films Bureau, Film House, Wardour Street, W.1.

Heads and Tails (Greyhound racing).

DISTRIBUTION: Denning

BRIDGEWATER: Palace

BOURNEMOUTH: News Theatre

CINDERFORD: Palace

CHEPSTOW: Palace

DORCHESTER: Palace

FARNWORTH: Ritz

GUERNSEY: Lyric

GORTON: Cosmo

ILFRACOMBE: Scala

LYDNEY: Picture House

LONDONDERRY: Palace

MONMOUTH: Picture House

NORTHAMPTON: Exchange

ROTHERHAM: Whitehall

SWINDON: Palace

WEYMOUTH: Regent

Nov. 25, 3 days

Nov. 22, 6 days

Nov. 11, 3 days

Nov. 8, 3 days

Nov. 25, 3 days

Nov. 4, 3 days

Nov. 11, 3 days

Nov. 1, 7 days

Nov. 1, 3 days

Nov. 1, 3 days

Nov. 29, 2 days

Nov. 8, 3 days

Nov. 15, 6 days

Nov. 1, 7 days

Nov. 22, 6 days

Nov. 1, 7 days

Heart of an Empire (Historical significance of St. James's Park and the surrounding buildings and memorials).

DISTRIBUTION: M.G.M.

PRODUCTION: Strand Films

DIRECTION: Marion Grierson

ANNAN: Picture Palace

INVERURIE: Victoria Picture House

LITTLEPORT: Regal Cinema

PORTAFERRY: Cinema

STAPLE HILL: Regal

Nov. 29, 3 days

Nov. 22, 3 days

Nov. 8, 3 days

Nov. 25, 2 days

Nov. 8, 3 days

Hollywood To-day (Behind the scenes in Film City).

DISTRIBUTION: Kinograph

PRODUCTION: Rupert Grayson

BRADFORD: Grange

BRIERLEY HILL: Odeon

HINCKLEY: Odeon

Nov. 1, 3 days

Nov. 4, 3 days

Nov. 1, 6 days

LANCASTER: Odeon

LEEDS: Headingley Picture House

LLANDUDNO: Odeon

MATLOCK: Cinema House

SHEFFIELD: Darnall, Balfour

Nov. 22, 6 days

Nov. 11, 3 days

Nov. 22, 6 days

Nov. 4, 3 days

Nov. 4, 3 days

Islands of the Bounty (Islands associated with the famous mutiny).

DISTRIBUTION: A.B.F.D.

ALFRETON: Ritz

BAKEWELL: Picture House

BOLTON: Gem

BURNLEY: Andrews

CLITHEROE: King's

CARDIFF: Park Hall

CHURCH: Queens

GRIMSBY: Lyric

GATESHEAD: Ravensworth

HYDE: Scala

HARTLEPOOL: Queens

HEXHAM: Forum

JEDBURGH: Cinema

MAYBOLE: Garrick

MURTON: Olympia

NEWTON HEATH: Pavilion

NEWFIELD: Grand

REDCAR: Regent

STANTON HILL: Cinema

Nov. 10, 2 days

Nov. 18, 3 days

Nov. 18, 3 days

Nov. 25, 3 days

Nov. 29, 6 days

Nov. 1, 6 days

Nov. 1, 3 days

Nov. 1, 3 days

Nov. 8, 3 days

Nov. 15, 6 days

Nov. 29, 3 days

Nov. 22, 3 days

Nov. 10, 2 days

Nov. 6, 1 day

Nov. 29, 3 days

Nov. 1, 3 days

Nov. 15, 3 days

Nov. 22, 6 days

Nov. 25, 3 days

Joie de Vivre (Cartoon).

DISTRIBUTION: Denning

PRODUCTION: Gross and Hoppin

OXFORD: Scala

Nov. 1, 6 days

Men Against the Sea (Documentary of North Sea trawling).

DISTRIBUTION: Kinograph

DIRECTION: Vernon Sewell

DIDSBURY: Capitol

EASTBOURNE: Winter Gardens Cinema

MATLOCK: Cinema House

YEADON: Picture House

Nov. 8, 6 days

Nov. 11, 3 days

Nov. 1, 3 days

Nov. 25, 3 days

Night Mail (Documentary of the northward trip of the postal special).

DISTRIBUTION: A.B.F.D.

PRODUCTION: Basil Wright, Harry Watt

BAKEWELL: Picture House

BRANDON: Cinema

COVENTRY: Plaza

Alexandra

Forum

HULL: Tower

HUDDERSFIELD: Premier

POYNTON: Cinema

SOMERCOTES: Empire

SALFORD: Princes

Nov. 18, 3 days

Nov. 24, 3 days

Nov. 28, 1 day

Nov. 23, 1 day

Nov. 14, 1 day

Nov. 1, 3 days

Nov. 4, 3 days

Nov. 25, 3 days

Nov. 22, 3 days

Nov. 26, 2 days

Nomad in the North (Scenic film of Norway).

DISTRIBUTION: Kinograph

PRODUCTION & DIRECTION: C. E. Hodges

GUERNSEY: Lyric

JERSEY: Opera House

LEEDS: Assembly Rooms

Majestic

LIVERPOOL: Bedford

SOUTHEND: Kursaal

Shorts (Contd.)

Rooftops of London (Documentary).

DISTRIBUTION: M.G.M.

PRODUCTION: Strand Films

DIRECTION: Paul Rotha

BAWTRY: Palace Cinema	Nov. 19, 2 days
BENTHAM: Picture House	Nov. 1, 2 days
DARNELL: Lyric	Nov. 11, 3 days
GLASGOW: New Bedford	Nov. 8, 6 days
La Scala	Nov. 8, 6 days
LEICESTER: Trocadero	Nov. 29, 3 days
LEAMINGTON: Bath Cinema	Nov. 15, 3 days
LONG EATON: Scala Cinema	Nov. 4, 3 days
MORECAMBE: Whitehall Picture Hse.	Nov. 11, 3 days
STAFFORD: Picture House	Nov. 11, 3 days

Secret Hiding Places (Priest holes to be found in English country houses.)

DISTRIBUTION: Kinograph

DIRECTION: Granville Squiers

BASINGSTOKE: Waldorf	Nov. 21, 7 days
MANCHESTER: Withington, Scala	Nov. 1, 3 days
MATLOCK: Cinema House	Nov. 25, 3 days
NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE: Picture House, Jesmond	Nov. 18, 3 days

Secrets of the Stars (Spotlight on British stages and studios).

DISTRIBUTION: Kinograph

PRODUCTION: Argyle British Productions Ltd.

BRADFORD: St. Georges	Nov. 1, 6 days
BIRMINGHAM: Rink, Smethwick	Nov. 7, 7 days
BARNSTAPLE: Gaumont Palace	Nov. 22, 3 days
GLOSSOP: Empire	Nov. 22, 3 days
HEREFORD: Odeon	Nov. 28, 4 days
HANLEY: Regent	Nov. 15, 6 days
LEEDS: Scala	Nov. 1, 6 days
Coliseum	Nov. 1, 6 days
LEICESTER: City Cinema	Nov. 15, 6 days
Picture House	Nov. 8, 6 days
LIVERPOOL: Plaza	Nov. 15, 6 days
MANCHESTER: Corona, W. Gorton	Nov. 25, 3 days
NOTTINGHAM: Hippodrome	Nov. 22, 6 days
SALISBURY: Gaumont Palace	Nov. 22, 6 days
WEYMOUTH: Regent	Nov. 8, 6 days
WOLVERHAMPTON: Queens	Nov. 1, 6 days

Seventh Day (How London spends its Sunday).

DISTRIBUTION: Kinograph

DIRECTION: A. P. Barralet

MANCHESTER: Tatler Nov. 22, 6 days

Six-Thirty Collection (Documentary of the West End sorting office).

DISTRIBUTION: A.B.F.D.

PRODUCTION: John Grierson for G.P.O. Film Unit

DIRECTION: Edgar Anstey, Harry Watt

AIRDRIE: Empire Nov. 8, 3 days

Snow Water (Water power in the Swiss mountains).

DISTRIBUTION: Kinograph

DIRECTION: H. Dreyer

HARROGATE: Odeon	Nov. 1, 6 days
HULL: Langham	Nov. 11, 3 days
Savoy	Nov. 8, 3 days
West Park	Nov. 29, 3 days
LONDON: News Thea., Victoria Stn.	Nov. 8, 3 days
MORECAMBE: Tower	Nov. 28, 4 days
NEWPORT, I.O.W.: Odeon	Nov. 22, 3 days
NOTTINGHAM: Grand	Nov. 1, 6 days
NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE: News Theatre	Nov. 1, 6 days
WARRINGTON: Odeon	Nov. 1, 6 days

Statue Parade (Historical treatment of London statues).

DISTRIBUTION: M.G.M.

PRODUCTION: Strand Films

DIRECTION: Paul Burnford and Ralph Keene

BELFAST: Lyric	Nov. 1, 6 days
BAWTRY: The Palace	Nov. 29, 2 days
BENTHAM: Picture House	Nov. 18, 3 days
COLWYN BAY: Arcadia	Nov. 1, 3 days
LONDON: Strand Cin., Agar St.	Nov. 15, 3 days
Monseigneur, Piccadilly	Nov. 22, 3 days
Sphere, Tottenham Ct. Rd.	Nov. 25, 4 days
NORTH WHITTINGTON: Oxford	Nov. 12, 2 days
PORTLAND: New Regal Cinema	Nov. 18, 3 days
TRANMERE: Coliseum	Nov. 18, 3 days

Stolen Heart (Silhouette film).

PRODUCTION: Lotte Reiniger

LONDON: Tatler, Charing Cross Rd. Nov. 8, 7 days

Strange Adventures (About Africa).

DISTRIBUTION: Denning

ASHFORD: Odeon	Nov. 22, 3 days
BARROW: Coliseum	Nov. 29, 3 days
BOURNEMOUTH: News Theatre	Nov. 29, 3 days
BATTLEFIELD: Mayfair	Nov. 15, 3 days
BECKENHAM: Regal	Nov. 1, 7 days
BRIGHTON: Court	Nov. 1, 7 days
CLAPHAM: Imperial	Nov. 1, 7 days
CHESTER: Music Hall	Nov. 4, 3 days
EDINBURGH: Ritz	Nov. 1, 7 days
Lyceum	Nov. 1, 7 days
GRAVESEND: Plaza	Nov. 1, 7 days
GRIMSBY: Savoy	Nov. 8, 5 days
ISLINGTON: Annex	Nov. 15, 3 days
LOWESTOFT: Odeon	Nov. 22, 6 days
READING: Savoy	Nov. 15, 6 days
SOUTHPORT: Palladium	Nov. 7, 1 day
SWINDON: Palace	Nov. 1, 3 days
WEMBLEY: Wembley Hall	Nov. 15, 3 days
WINDSOR: Empire	Nov. 21, 4 days

They Shall Not Pass (Documentary of the Civil War in Spain; English commentary).

DISTRIBUTION: International Sound Films

PRODUCTION: Ministry of Public Instruction in Madrid

OXFORD: Scala Nov. 1, 6 days

This Other Eden (A trip down the river Eden, in Westmorland).

DISTRIBUTION: Kinograph

BRENTWOOD: Palace	Nov. 15, 6 days
CREWE: Plaza	Nov. 1, 6 days
ECCLES: Regent	Nov. 11, 3 days
HEREFORD: Odeon	Nov. 25, 3 days
LIVERPOOL: Empress	Nov. 22, 6 days
Gaumont Pal. (Anfield)	Nov. 22, 6 days
LONDON: G-B Movietone News,	
Shaftesbury Avenue	Nov. 8, 7 days
PETERSFIELD: Savoy	Nov. 11, 3 days
WALLASEY: New Brighton, Trocadero	Nov. 4, 3 days

To-day We Live (The depressed areas of Wales).

DISTRIBUTION: A.B.F.D.

PRODUCTION: Strand Films

DIRECTION: Ralph Bond and R. I. Grierson

LONDON: Tatler, Charing Cross Rd. Nov. 15, 7 days

We Live in Two Worlds ("A film talk by J. B. Priestley.")

DISTRIBUTION: A.B.F.D.

PRODUCTION: G.P.O. Film Unit

DIRECTION: Alberto Cavalcanti

LONDON: Tatler, Charing Cross Rd. Nov. 29, 7 days

MANCHESTER: Tatler Nov. 15, 6 days

Wheel and Woe (The evolution of the motor car).

DISTRIBUTION: Kinograph

PRODUCTION: Liberty

DIRECTION: W. G. Duncalf

BARNSTAPLE: Gaumont Palace	Nov. 18, 3 days
BISHOP'S STORTFORD: Regent	Nov. 18, 3 days
BRIDGEWATER: Palace	Nov. 11, 3 days
BIRMINGHAM: Harborne Picture Hse.	Nov. 1, 3 days
CHESTER: Gaumont Palace	Nov. 22, 6 days
CIRENCESTER: Picture House	Nov. 11, 3 days
CHIPPENHAM: Gaumont Palace	Nov. 1, 3 days
HAMILTON: La Scala	Nov. 11, 3 days
HEREFORD: Odeon	Nov. 21, 4 days
LIVERPOOL: Corona	Nov. 15, 6 days
LYDNEY: Picture House	Nov. 11, 3 days
NORTH SHIELDS: Princes	Nov. 15, 6 days
PETERSFIELD: Savoy	Nov. 22, 3 days
PUDSEY: Picture House	Nov. 15, 3 days
SALTAIRE: Picture House	Nov. 1, 3 days
WINDSOR: Royalty	Nov. 7, 4 days
WEYBRIDGE: Odeon	Nov. 22, 6 days
WEYMOUTH: Regent	Nov. 29, 6 days

Foreign Films

Le Dernier Milliardaire (French).

DISTRIBUTION: Denning

DIRECTION: René Clair

STARRING: Paul Ollivier, Raymond Cordy

LONDON: Everyman, Hampstead Nov. 1, 7 days

The Hague (Dutch documentary).

DISTRIBUTION: Film Society

DIRECTION: Otto van Neijenhoff, F. Kal

LONDON: Tatler, Charing Cross Rd. Nov. 22, 7 days

Kadetten (German).

DIRECTION: Georg Jacoby

STARRING: Albert Basserman

OXFORD: Scala Nov. 15, 3 days

Liebesmelodie (Austrian).

DIRECTION: Tourjansky

STARRING: Marta Eggerth

Leo Slezak

Hans Mosen

OXFORD: Scala Nov. 22, 6 days

Nitchevo (French).

DIRECTOR: Jacques de Baron Celli

STARRING: Henry Baur, Marcel Chantel

LONDON: Berkeley Nov. 1, indefinitely

The Pearls of the Crown (French).

DIRECTION: Sacha Guitry

STARRING: Sacha Guitry, Jacqueline Mogan

LONDON: Curzon Nov. 1, indefinitely

Le Roman d'un Tricheur (French).

PRODUCTION: Cineas

DIRECTOR & STAR: Sacha Guitry

LONDON: Academy Nov. 1, indefinitely

Sous les Toits de Paris (French).

DIRECTION: René Clair

STARRING: Albert Prejean

OXFORD: Scala Nov. 8, 6 days

Squadron Bianco (Italian).

PRODUCTION: Roma Films

DIRECTION: Augusto Genina

STARRING: Fosco Giachetti

Anthony Ceuta

Fulvia Lanzi

LONDON: Academy

Following *Le Roman d'un Tricheur*

Tales from the Vienna Woods (Austrian).

DIRECTION: Georg Jacoby

STARRING: Wolf Albach-Retty

Leo Slizak

Magda Schnieder

LONDON: Studio One Nov. 1, indefinitely

IMPERIAL TOPS AGAIN

Out of a total of 34 shorts shown on these pages Imperial once again takes the lead in recording.

5 are Foreign

10 are British

19 are Imperial

which shows that all other British studios put together recorded 10, and Imperial alone recorded 19.

This is our steady average month by month.

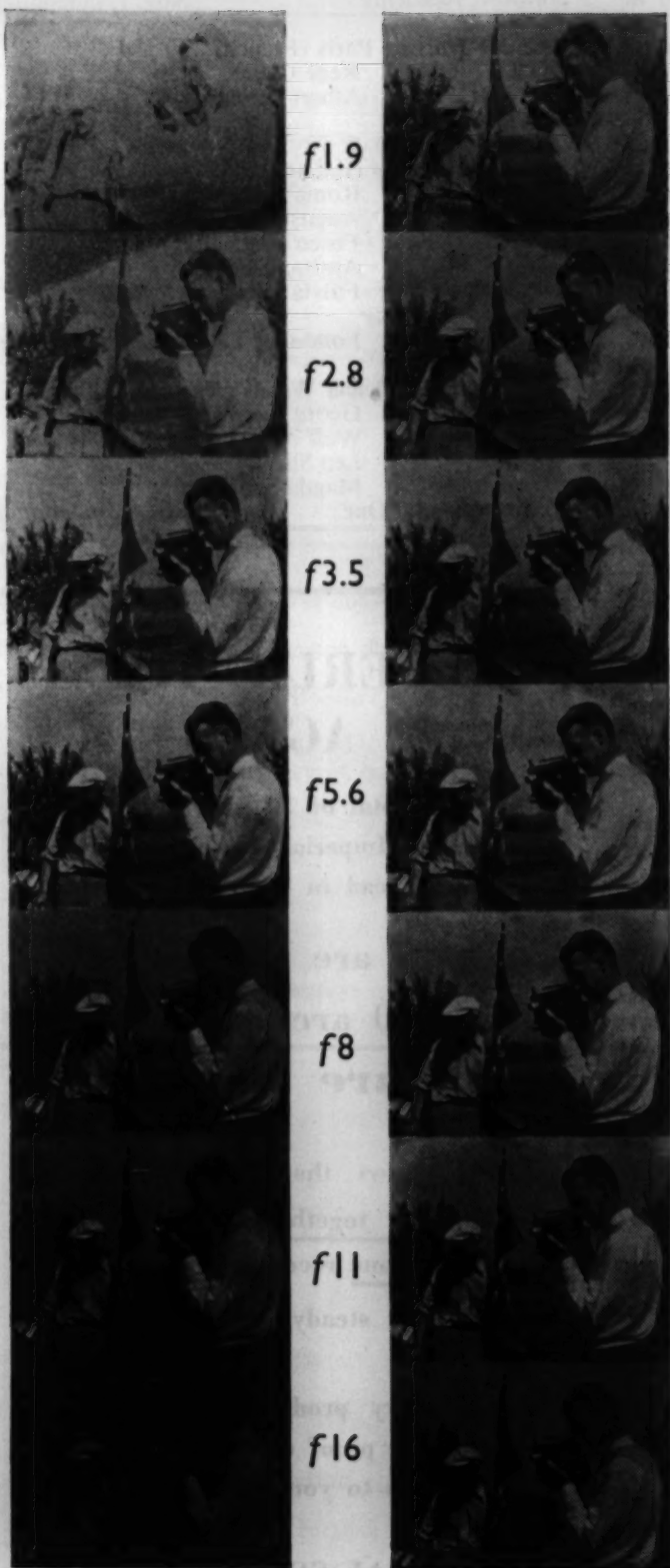
Documentary producers, do you want any further proof of the superiority of our services to you?

IMPERIAL SOUND STUDIOS

84 WARDOUR STREET

GER 1963

Why Reversal Film?



"In the reversal process the exposed image is developed and then the developed silver is dissolved in a bleaching bath which oxidises the silver. This leaves behind the undeveloped silver bromide which was not affected by the developer because it was not exposed to light. After a fresh exposure to light this remaining silver bromide is developed in its turn and gives a positive."*

By regulating the amount of this "fresh exposure to light," the processing of Ciné-Kodak black-and-white film compensates for all but extreme errors in the original exposure and results in even film density.

Two series of widely different exposures are reproduced on this page. The first was processed without compensating exposure and shows wide differences in density. The second was processed with compensating exposure and shows evenness of density in spite of great differences in exposure.

The Ciné-Kodak exposure-compensating system is exclusive to Ciné-Kodak Reversal Film processing. It has saved hundreds of thousands of feet of 16 mm. and "Eight" pictures that would otherwise have been spoiled by exposure errors. Get your exposures as right as possible! But rely on the great latitude of Ciné-Kodak Reversal Film *plus* its exclusive automatic compensating exposure to compensate for exposure errors which, in spite of fine judgment and the best available exposure meters, are, sooner or later, bound to occur.

* Extract from "Photography", by Dr. C. E. K. Mees, Kodak Director of Research.—G. Bell & Sons Ltd., London, 7/6.

CINÉ-KODAK REVERSAL FILMS (Black-and-White).

CINÉ-KODAK PANCHROMATIC FILM (16 mm.). *The standard film for outdoor cinematography.*

CINÉ-KODAK SUPER SENSITIVE PANCHROMATIC FILM (16 mm.). *Its high speed makes it indispensable for artificial light work, and for work in weak daylight.*

CINÉ-KODAK "EIGHT" PANCHROMATIC FILM (8 mm.). *A superfine-grain film, for the Ciné-Kodak "Eight".*

CINÉ-KODAK PANCHROMATIC SOUND RECORDING FILM (16 mm.). *Perforated on one side only.*

All the above are reversal films, sold at prices which include processing and return postage.

For full particulars, write to Mr. W. F. Taylor, Dept. 57,
KODAK LIMITED, KODAK HOUSE, KINGSWAY, LONDON, W.C.2

WORLD FILM NEWS

AMATEUR AND TECHNICAL SECTION

The use of Film in Education

Education by film differs from all other forms of teaching, for it depends on the efforts of two individuals, namely a teacher and a technician. Successful results call for a close collaboration between them throughout.

The teacher must become fully conversant with and understand the powers and limitations of the film, and should, if possible, make a study in filmic education entirely. Similarly the technician should acquire a knowledge of the subject being undertaken, and should concentrate on educational work, as the differences between educational and entertainment or other types of films are considerable. In any case the taking on of both the technical and educational side by one person should be avoided, as it is difficult to give attention to both.

The main construction of the teaching film differs considerably from the story film, and a somewhat specialised technique is necessary. The purpose of the latter is to tell a story to the audience, and it accomplishes this through the visual and aural senses. Details of construction such as cutting, lighting or camera position should only be perceived by the audience subconsciously, and in no case should they be aware of them.

Variations of lighting or camera position can be utilised to great benefit in the educational film, but only for purposes of emphasising details. The camera position must never be varied for artistic reasons, but only where it is required to bring into prominence less conspicuous objects. For example, it might be necessary in a film showing the workings of an engine to accentuate some particular part, such as the moving of the valves, or the turning of the crankshaft.

The lighting must be such that the objects being photographed are shown up to the best possible advantage, and no suggestion of atmosphere must be present. The lighting can be made to accentuate any particular part of an object by applying greater brilliance thereto.

The black and white values of the film are far greater than is commonly supposed. Black and white is far easier to look at and has not the distracting effect of colour. This is especially so

by

Paul Burnford, A.R.P.S.

where the objects are moving, as colour in motion is difficult to appreciate.

Nevertheless, colour can be of very great importance where the instructional value is directly or partly dependent on actual colour values, such as in botany or medical studies.

In a medical film, especially those dealing with diseases of the skin, colour is essential, as a number of diseases are only distinguishable by their actual colour differences. Imperfect colour can do more harm than good, and it is very important to verify that the system used is accurate.

The advantage of a sound or silent film would depend on the type of subject being undertaken.

The silent film should be utilised where natural sounds are of little or no value, where no descriptive speaking is required, or where more satisfactory results can be obtained through the use of titles.

Titles should always be very short and concise, and of the simplest wording. The running time should be carefully considered. Repetition or gradual enlarging of titles greatly emphasises any point.

Various adequate 16 mm. silent projectors for ordinary classroom use can be purchased for under thirty pounds. Unfortunately, there is no sound-on-film projector marketed under £60, but a machine at this price is, of course, very satisfactory. However, as soon as demand increases, a reduction in price is inevitable. Sound on disc equipment can be purchased much cheaper. This method has the advantage of being able to attach sound to almost any silent projector, but unfortunately is not so versatile or portable as the sound-on-film system.

The classroom or lectureroom should be kept as dark as possible. Too much light not only distracts attention but is rather damaging to the eyes. Where light is necessary for making notes, the light should not be allowed to reach the screen.

The teacher will become accustomed to fixing up and threading the projector, which on modern machines is a very simple process. Care should be taken to project at the correct speed (on sound-on-film projectors the speed is fixed).

Where there is plenty of available projector light, a white screen is most satisfactory, as the same brilliancy is observed from any position in the room.

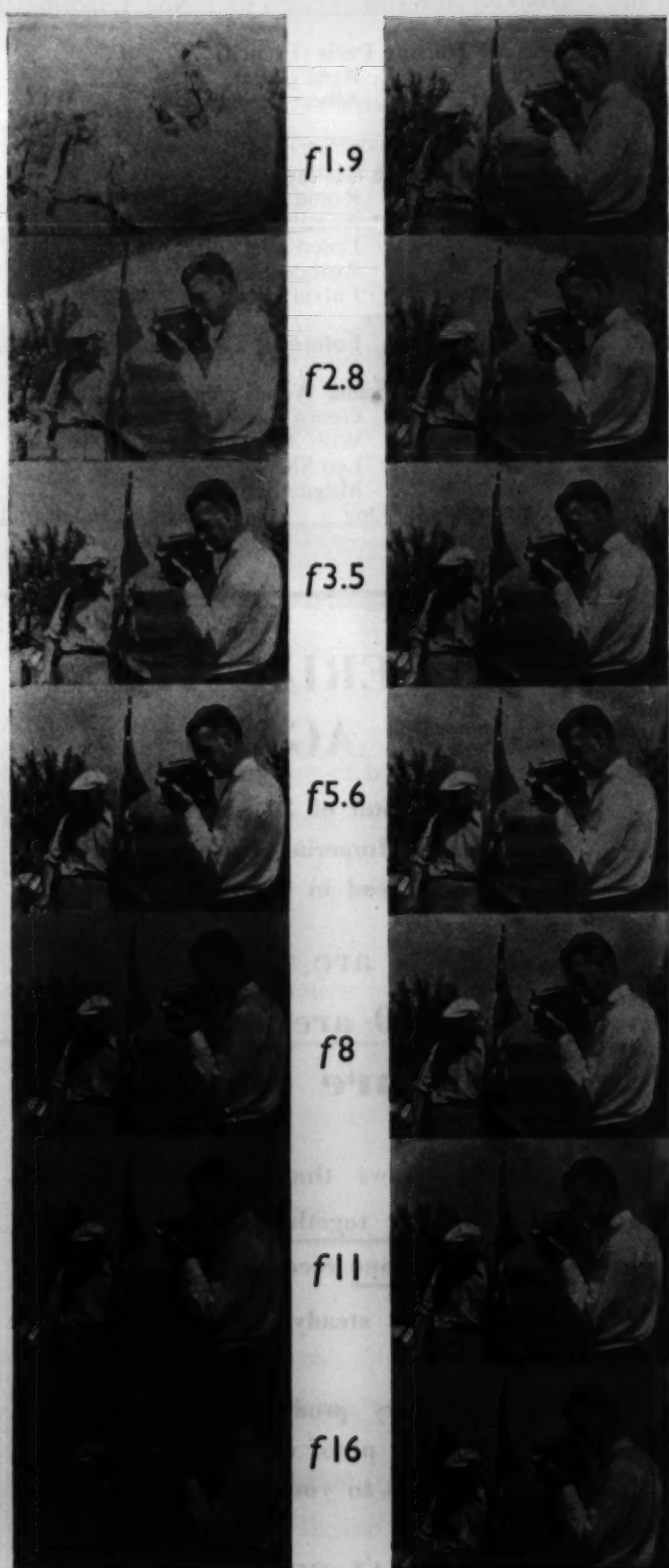
When the projector is equipped with a 2" lens, which is the usual standard, it should be placed at the back of the room. The 2" lens is so designed that the audience should be seated at the same distance from the screen, and on a level with the projector, to observe the picture in its correct proportions. But as it is impossible for everyone to be seated together, the placing of the projector at the back insures that no one sees the picture under size.

It is essential for the teacher to become fully conversant with and understand all the necessary factors for competent showing of the film. Absolute proficiency must be observed in the various technical details, otherwise the result can cause more harm than good.

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Education by film differs from all other forms of teaching, for it depends on the efforts of two individuals, namely a teacher and a technician. Successful results call for a close collaboration between them throughout.

The teacher must become fully conversant with and understand the powers and limitations of the film, and should, if possible, make a study in filmic education entirely. Similarly the technician should acquire a knowledge of the subject being undertaken, and should concentrate on educational work, as the differences between educational and entertainment or other types of films are considerable. In any case the taking on of both the technical and educational side by one person should be avoided, as it is difficult to give attention to both.

The main construction of the teaching film differs considerably from the story film, and a somewhat specialised technique is necessary. The purpose of the latter is to tell a story to the audience, and it accomplishes this through the visual and aural senses. Details of construction such as cutting, lighting or camera position should only be perceived by the audience subconsciously, and in no case should they be aware of them.

Variations of lighting or camera position can be utilised to great benefit in the educational film, but only for purposes of emphasising details. The camera position must never be varied for artistic reasons, but only where it is required to bring into prominence less conspicuous objects. For example, it might be necessary in a film showing the workings of an engine to accentuate some particular part, such as the moving of the valves, or the turning of the crankshaft.

The lighting must be such that the objects being photographed are shown up to the best possible advantage, and no suggestion of atmosphere must be present. The lighting can be made to accentuate any particular part of an object by applying greater brilliance thereto.

The black and white values of the film are far greater than is commonly supposed. Black and white is far easier to look at and has not the distracting effect of colour. This is especially so

by

Paul Burnford, A.R.P.S.

where the objects are moving, as colour in motion is difficult to appreciate.

Nevertheless, colour can be of very great importance where the instructional value is directly or partly dependent on actual colour values, such as in botany or medical studies.

In a medical film, especially those dealing with diseases of the skin, colour is essential, as a number of diseases are only distinguishable by their actual colour differences. Imperfect colour can do more harm than good, and it is very important to verify that the system used is accurate.

The advantage of a sound or silent film would depend on the type of subject being undertaken.

The silent film should be utilised where natural sounds are of little or no value, where no descriptive speaking is required, or where more satisfactory results can be obtained through the use of titles.

Titles should always be very short and concise, and of the simplest wording. The running time should be carefully considered. Repetition or gradual enlarging of titles greatly emphasises any point.

Various adequate 16 mm. silent projectors for ordinary classroom use can be purchased for under thirty pounds. Unfortunately, there is no sound-on-film projector marketed under £60, but a machine at this price is, of course, very satisfactory. However, as soon as demand increases, a reduction in price is inevitable. Sound on disc equipment can be purchased much cheaper. This method has the advantage of being able to attach sound to almost any silent projector, but unfortunately is not so versatile or portable as the sound-on-film system.

The classroom or lectureroom should be kept as dark as possible. Too much light not only distracts attention but is rather damaging to the eyes. Where light is necessary for making notes, the light should not be allowed to reach the screen.

The teacher will become accustomed to fixing up and threading the projector, which on modern machines is a very simple process. Care should be taken to project at the correct speed (on sound-on-film projectors the speed is fixed).

Where there is plenty of available projector light, a white screen is most satisfactory, as the same brilliancy is observed from any position in the room.

When the projector is equipped with a 2" lens, which is the usual standard, it should be placed at the back of the room. The 2" lens is so designed that the audience should be seated at the same distance from the screen, and on a level with the projector, to observe the picture in its correct proportions. But as it is impossible for everyone to be seated together, the placing of the projector at the back insures that no one sees the picture under size.

It is essential for the teacher to become fully conversant with and understand all the necessary factors for competent showing of the film. Absolute proficiency must be observed in the various technical details, otherwise the result can cause more harm than good.

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FILM SOCIETIES AND CLUBS

FILM SOCIETY OF GLASGOW: Hon. Secretary, D. Paterson Walker, Esq., 127 St. Vincent Street, Glasgow, C.2.

The Society's preparations for the ensuing season are well advanced. The season commenced on the first Monday of October and meetings will be held probably fortnightly in Cranston's Picture House, Glasgow, until the middle of April, 1938. The experiment of having a Repertory Season which was instituted last year will be continued as it was an undoubted success. More than 50 per cent of the members attended both Repertory and Ordinary meetings. As in previous seasons lectures will be arranged for.

It is expected that the membership will again be between 900 and 1,000 and the subscription will be unchanged.

ROYAL PHOTOGRAPHIC SOCIETY: Hon. Secretary, R. Howard Cricks, Esq., F.R.P.S., 35 Russell Square, London, W.C.1.

The Royal Photographic Society's Exhibition of Kinematography, arranged by the Kinematograph Section, is to be opened by Lord Strabolgi on Saturday, November 13th, at 3 p.m. The theme is to be "The Film as a Social Force".

Films to be shown are to be selected from the entry in the Film Competition, which this year included for the first time classes for 35mm. shorts. Films representative of every type of production—professional, amateur, and scientific—will be included.

The lectures arranged in conjunction with the Exhibition cover colour, sound, art direction, and lighting, while an ever-popular feature is the demonstrations of new apparatus. Admission to meetings is by invitation of a member or by ticket obtainable from the Secretary.

The Exhibition itself is to include a representative collection of standard and sub-standard apparatus, and stills from the leading films now in production.

It will be open daily from 10 a.m. to 9 p.m., except during lectures. Admission is free.

WOLVERHAMPTON FILM SOCIETY: Membership Secretary: Miss D. Roston, 60 Great Brick-kiln Street, Wolverhampton. Programme Secretary, E. L. Packer, Esq., 58 Himley Crescent, Wolverhampton.

Season started Wednesday, October 20th, at West End Cinema, Coleman Street. Subscription 10s. 6d. for six meetings.

BOGNOR REGIS FILM SOCIETY: Hon. Secretary, Miss L. Cornish, "Southernhay," New Barn Lane, Felpham, near Bognor Regis.

Production of *News from Hollywood* has been completed—a 400 ft. comedy on 16 mm. The shots have been very consistent in exposure due to "Highlight Exposure."

The Newsreel department report that they have 500 ft. of local events, always of importance in the annual Public Show.

The Society's first documentary film, of local *Arts and Crafts*, is being produced, and if successful at the public show will be followed by a series including *Farming, Spinning and Weaving*.

THE IRISH FILM SOCIETY: Hon. Secretary, Liam O'Laoghaire, Esq., 41 South Circular Road, Portobello, Dublin.

For the present season subscriptions are being raised to one guinea so that adequate revenue will be available for a really representative programme of some of the world's finest films. Extensive publicity is essential for such a project in Ireland, where a vague dissatisfaction with the commercial cinema exists, but where constructive alternatives have yet to be envisioned and carried into effect. It is here that the Film Society hopes in time to be able to help in crystallising the discontent and showing the achievements of other countries to awaken the spirit of emulation.

The projected programme for the season includes *Hey Rup, The Road to Life, Türksib, Nibelungen, The Wonderful Lie*, and it is also hoped to secure a copy of Denis Johnston's *Guests of the Nation* for showing. Lectures will be given by the Hon. Secretary and Geoffrey Dalton and a member of the English Documentary Groups. The season opened on October 24th.

SCOTTISH FEDERATION OF FILM SOCIETIES: Hon. Secretary, Forsyth Hardy, Esq., 54 Brantsfield Gardens, Edinburgh, 10.

During the past year the Federation has operated a successful scheme of co-operative booking. A new development of activity along this line is the organisation of pre-viewing facilities whereby film society officials far removed from London may see, in advance of making their selections for the season, films which might be suitable for inclusion in their programmes.

At a week-end session in London in August representatives from various parts of Scotland viewed twenty-one one-, two- and three-reel shorts and the greater part of seven feature films. In addition several members also saw films currently showing at the Continental cinemas. All this on the hottest week-end of the year!

This "viewing" service to societies is regarded as one of the most fruitful results of active co-operation between the Scottish societies. A further preview was arranged in Edinburgh in September, when a number of shorts and Dreyer's *Vampyre* were shown.

THE GUILD OF CATHOLIC TEACHERS' FILM SOCIETY: Hon. Secretary, Terence Grant, Esq., The Catholic Institute, Newton Place, Charing Cross, Glasgow.

The Society commenced its winter session on Thursday, September 2nd, when all the members listened to a short lecture on "Colour." This was accompanied by a showing of the *Corpus Christi* film and parts of *The Assumption Procession*. The Society is holding a show of films in St. Aloysius Hall, Glasgow, on November 18th and 19th. The programme will include the Millhill missionary films of India and Uganda, in addition to educational and other films.

OXFORD FILM SOCIETY: Hon. Secretary, E. F. Bowtell, Esq., 105 Victoria Road, Oxford.

The Society will hold its next three meetings at the Scala Cinema on November 14th and 28th,

and December 12th. Duvivier's *The Golem* will be presented on November 14th.

ACE MOVIES: Hon. Secretary, Channon Wood, Esq., 15 Openview, S.W.18. Studio: 90 High Street Mews, Wimbledon, S.W.19.

Excellent progress is being made on the production of the modern version of a medieval legend referred to in previous reports, work on the fourth set being now under way. It is hoped to finish the picture early in the New Year.

The Ace documentary unit, under the direction of Channon Wood, is at present working on a film for the Kensington Housing Trust Ltd. This commission was the result of an introduction by the Amateur Services Club.

It is anticipated that the next public showing of Ace films will be next February–March and it is not too early to start booking reservations.

WEST MIDDLESEX AMATEUR CINE CLUB: Hon. Secretary, E. H. Whittleton, Esq., 39 Derwentwater Road, Acton, W.3.

Details of the programme for the new session are now available. They include lectures on lighting, sound synchronisation, and colour cinematography by well known lecturers. Plans are also in hand for a demonstration of television and sound film apparatus; a visit to a modern cinema, and a film studio; and exchange visits with other clubs. Shooting began on October 19th.

WEST ESSEX FILM SOCIETY: Hon. Secretary, F. J. Philpott, Esq., 7 Wellington Road, East Ham, E.6.

As satisfaction was not felt with regard to the quality of the rushes of the scenes already taken for the film in course of production, *Pot of Basil*, it has been decided to re-shoot on 16 mm. film.

CAMBRIDGE FILM PRODUCTIONS: 5–7 Portugal Place, Cambridge.

In view of the publication of the Second Report of the League of Nations on Nutrition, *Vitamins*—recently completed by Cambridge Film Productions—may be of more than specialised interest.

It shows that vitamins are no newfangled ramp. Scurvy—due to lack of vitamin C—has been the curse of sea-faring nations for hundreds of years, though detailed knowledge of it is the product of a search during the last thirty years. *Vitamins* describes how scurvy was studied and its curative vitamin identified. It describes also how rickets is prevented by Vitamin D.

It was an experiment by Sir Frederick Hopkins in 1912 which concentrated attention on minor dietary deficiencies. The method he used is demonstrated in the film and the result plotted step by step on a graph. This is valuable as a reconstruction showing a scientific method, though it claims no accuracy in detail. Other laboratory sequences were, however, made under the supervision of a scientist of international repute, and great attention has been paid to scientific accuracy.

Vitamins was directed by Geoffrey Innes and is his first documentary sound film. Arrangements for distribution are almost complete and will be announced in *World Film News*.

THE FILM SOCIETY: Hon. Secretary, Miss Barbara Frey, 31 Poland Street, W.1.

The first performance of the Film Society will be held at the New Gallery Kinema, at 2.30 p.m. on Sunday, November 14th, when the programme will include *The Last Night*, directed by J. Raisman (director of *The Soil is Thirsty*) and the Spanish documentary *Land Without Bread*, directed by Luis Bunuel.

Remaining performances will be held on December 5th, January 16th, February 6th, March 6th and April 3rd. Subscriptions for the season 19s., £1 12s. 6d., £2 10s. Special reduced rates for students and film technicians.

CATHOLIC FILM SOCIETY: Hon. Secretary, 36 Great Smith Street, S.W.1.

On October 13th the Society gave its first display of the season at Millicent Fawcett Hall, Westminster. *Great Awakening*, a Catholic social film and the Society's latest production was screened for the first time. Sound is introduced by a chorus which intones parts of the Pope's Encyclical, 'Rerum novarum,' as a background for a series of impressionistic shots of various aspects of industrial life.

A Unit has been formed for teachers, and special lectures will be given at the Society's rooms throughout the season. Catholic teachers are invited to write to the Assistant Secretary at the above address.

Mime classes have recommenced at the Interval Club, 22 Dean Street, Oxford Street, W.1, every Monday evening, and are open to both sexes. New members may join at any class.

The next public display will be at Millicent Fawcett Hall, Tufton Street, Westminster, at 8 p.m. on Wednesday, November 3rd. Tickets 1s. may be had from the Assistant Secretary.

THE RICHMOND FILM SOCIETY: Hon. Secretary, C. Jolliffe, Esq., 20 Cumberland Road, Kew.

The Society has just been formed to enable its members to see documentary, experimental and foreign films in Richmond. The season's activities will probably consist of five sub-standard sound programmes, the first of which was held on October 26th in Richmond.

If sufficient support is forthcoming, a more ambitious programme of activities will be launched, including, it is hoped, lectures, discussions, visits to studios, etc. All interested are invited to write to the Hon. Secretary for details.

B.A.S.C. ANNOUNCEMENT

All films on the *British Countryside*, *Architecture*, and *Scottish Youth Hostels*, to be entered for the British Amateur Services Club contest must be received by November 30th at:—

British Amateur Services Club,
34 Soho Square,
London, W.1.

Mr. John Grierson and Mr. Robert Flaherty will judge the films.

In accordance with a previous notice in *World Film News*, an extension of time, until early in the New Year, has been given on the *Hygiene* and *Home Planning* films. Definite closing date to be announced later.

A RE-WIND and EDITING BENCH

by George Cooper

The professional cinema projectionist uses a hand-driven rewind for inspecting and repairing films, and the rewind and inspection bench about to be described here is designed on the same lines and can very easily be constructed for only two or three shillings and will do all that is likely to be required of it.

The device is composed of a base 16 inches by 8 inches by seven-eighths inches. I used thick plywood, which is very strong and takes on a very nice finish after being sandpapered. Two pieces of strap iron bent at right angles to form uprights, a piece of quarter-inch shafting about six inches long, two brass electric nipples and nuts (nipples to be half-inch external diameter), two 2-inch Meccano pulleys, a piece of spring belt (Meccano), four nuts and bolts half-inch long, four rubber headed tacks, and one safety pin.

The two pieces of strap iron for uprights are bent as shown in the drawing. The width of these is not so very important, but I used one inch. Then in each, drill a hole large enough to accommodate the brass nipple. The nipple is then mounted in the upright and fastened with a nut at either side. A little shellac paint applied to the inner surfaces of the nuts will prevent them from working loose. The nipple forms a very serviceable bearing for the shaft.

Cut the shaft to the size shown and drill holes for the pin and reel stop. The shaft is now put into the bearing and the brass safety pin cut and bent as shown. The pin is then fastened into the shaft.

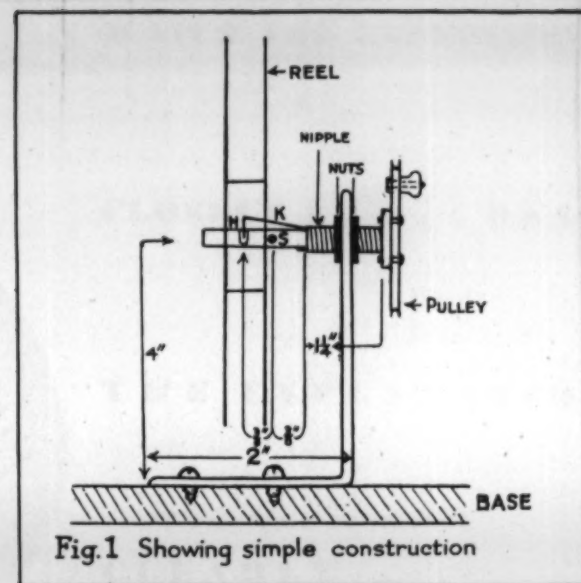


Fig. 1 Showing simple construction

The end of the pin at "H" must ride freely in the hole so that when the reel slot passes over it, it will spring up and down. The other end of the pin is bent over at right angles and forms a stop which prevents the shaft from floating back and forth. It should not be too snug, however, for some play is necessary.

The stop "S" may be a bolt or pin, and after it is positioned as shown may require some filing to allow the reel to go over the spring and be held firmly. If the reel does not go on far enough, file off some of the stop until the proper fitting is secured. A kettle cover knob is bolted to one of the pulleys to serve as a crank handle.

This system has proved highly satisfactory under actual working conditions. The spring belt is placed around the other pulley and serves as a brake. Very little tension is required on this pulley and it may be increased or decreased by tightening or loosening the eye hook on the base, or it may be slipped off for fast winding of film.

The bench will do for both the 8 and 16 mm. films. Both types of reels are the same in respect to the stops, the only difference being in the reel thickness and diameter.

Regarding the bench. The distance between the uprights can be made any reasonable figure but about 12 inches is suitable for 8 mm. reels and splicer, and around 16 inches for the 16 mm. reels.

A coat of shellac or varnish for the base, some enamel for the uprights, rubber headed tacks under the base for feet and the job is done.

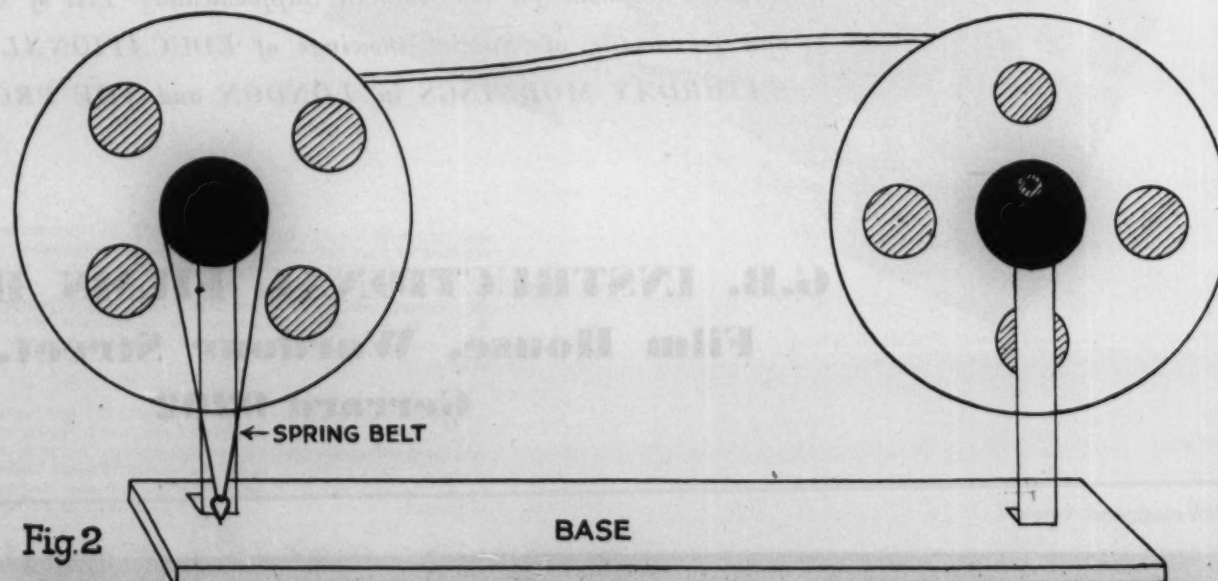


Fig. 2

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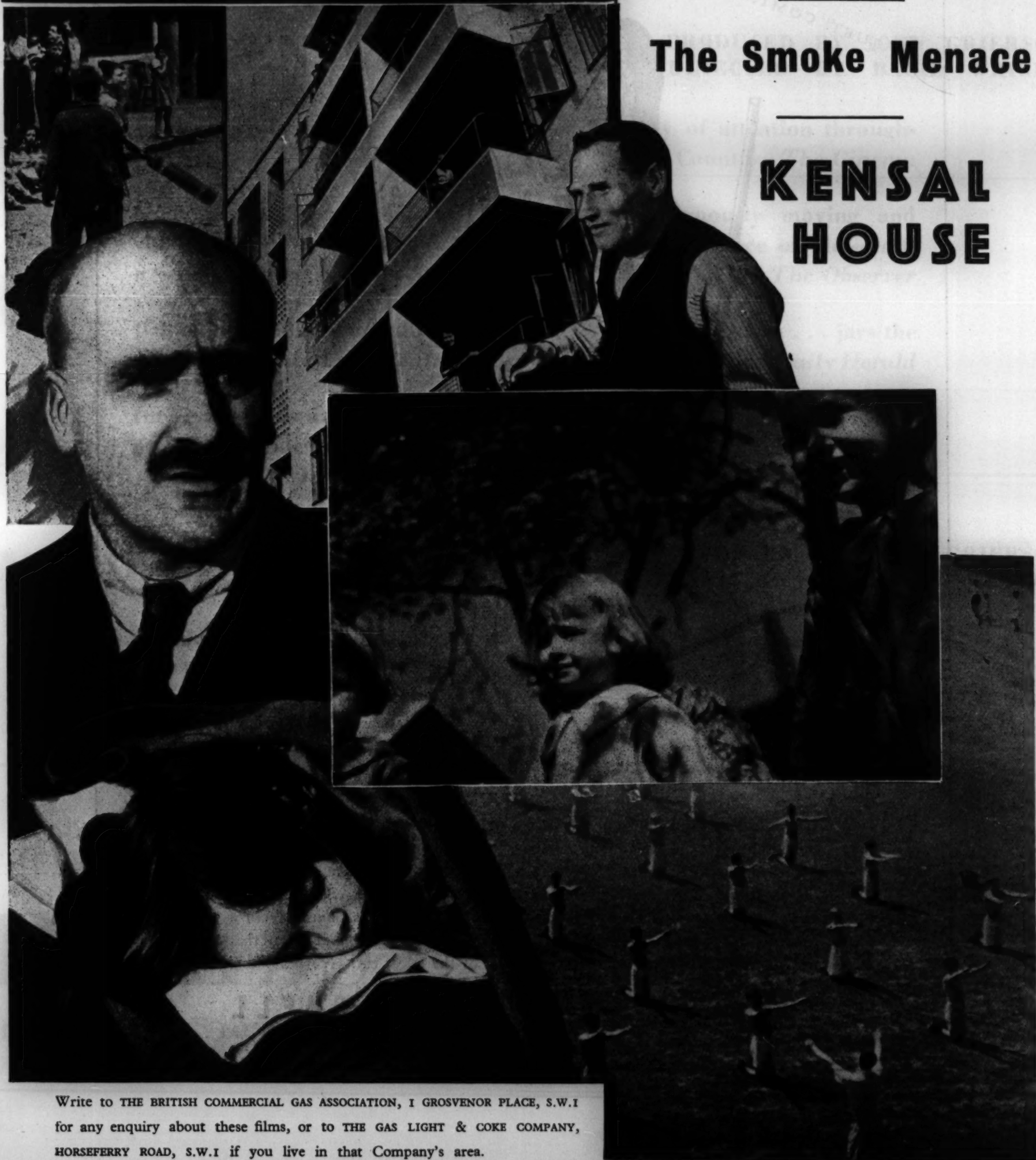
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WHO KILLED THE VAMP?

by Basil Wright

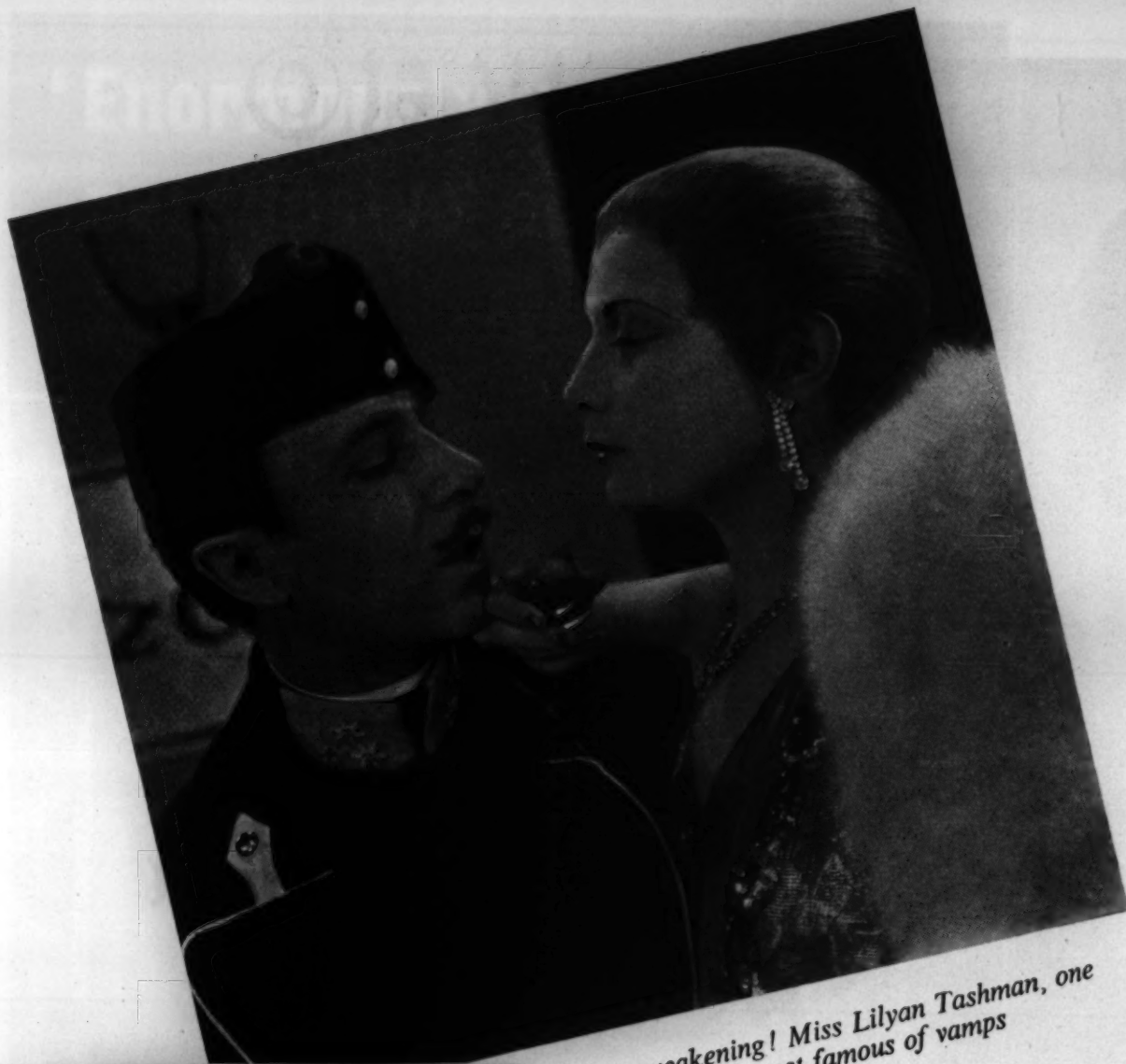


AND by vamps I mean your full-blooded, sexy, slinky, unscrupulous creatures, compounded half from the bad woman of Victorian melodrama and half from the odalisques of the naughty French novels. We haven't seen them for many a long year, and their names come down the chromium corridors of film-history merely as whispered echoes from the past. Theda Bara, Nita Naldi, Lya de Putti, Marie Prevost—their very names are an incantation. Most of them were out-and-out wicked, and lured the hero towards a fate worse than death—from which he was usually rescued in the nick of time by his fiancé (blonde), his wife (brunette), or his parents (pure silver). The vamps, with their raven hair and luscious mouths, represented all the allurements of illicit sex, the dreams that husbands try to avoid and adolescents pray for; and their ultimate downfall solved the spectator's guilty conscience. He had his personal cake and could eat the bun of respectability at the same time. How the women must have hated them—hated them for their luscious contours swathed in black velvet, hated them (and particularly Theda Bara) for wearing garments made from ropes of pearls. Bara, indeed, would have made Cleopatra look pretty silly, and had she ever jumped into a vat of vinegar the censor's hair would have risen like quills upon the fretful porpentine.

(Continued over the page)



Top left is Theda Bara, the famous vamp who played Cleopatra in 1918; and above, Claudette Colbert, the new-style Cleopatra



He's weakening! Miss Lilyan Tashman, one of the most famous of vamps



Myrna Loy—"the vamp in all her pristine viciousness"

Censors never liked vamps. Censors were on the side of the wives. But in spite of all that, I do not think it was the censors who killed the vamps. It was the decadence of the post-war generation. They just couldn't take it. Bara as Salome, Naldi's famous stomach dance, de Putti's Medusa-lips, were too bravely, too conspicuously uncompromising.

So the long decline began. First of all they went realistic, and called the vamp a prostitute, and Gloria Swanson made a big hit in *Sadie Thompson*. This was a very good film, and no one realised yet its direct rivalry to the vamp. Then came Clara Bow as Mrs. Glyn's *It Girl*. She was grand too; but "It" was not quite the same thing as the vamps had. For, as Seldes points out, the *It Girl* represented an essentially lighthearted and almost moral point of view as regards sex. With the vamp, sex was nothing if not serious.

THEN someone discovered that the audience could stand seeing the hero throwing things at the heroine, and this in turn gave them the idea of making the vamp a figure of fun. She was transferred to the two-reel comedies; the velvet robes were slammed in the doors of taxi-cabs, and the pearls were ripped off by funny men in false moustaches. The generation of Mae Busch and Thelma Todd arose. And with them came the successor to the *It Girl*—the platinum blonde, represented in excelsis by Jean Harlow. You

remember, perhaps, the great scene in *Hell's Angels*, where, dressed in the most exiguous of robes-de-chambre, she excused herself from the hero's presence, in order to put on "something more comfortable." Could Bara or Naldi have done it? A thousand times No.

The vamps had no chance. Their successors, from Swanson to Harlow, had all the talent, from sex to slapstick. Moreover, the vamps were stumped by Sound. In mime and gesture their seductions were easily accomplished; but when they had to speak, a raspberry hovered dangerously near. They put up a stiff fight, however, and by changing their tactics they kept a hold on films. Central Europe sent its quota, and Pola Negri (surely a spiritual vamp) kept a tattered flag flying on the wrong side of the fence.

In one series of films—the Warner Oland *Fu Manchu* cycle—the vamp reappeared in all her pristine viciousness in the person of Myrna Loy. *Fu Manchu* is now, alas, a detective, and, although Myrna Loy is my favourite comedy actress, I can never see her without a pang of regret for those earlier days when with sadistic knife and masochist lips she tortured the pure-minded young victims of the Tong.

But at last,

"Her strong enchantments failing
Her towers of fear in wreck
Her limbecks dried of poisons
And the knife at her neck"—

the Queen of Air and Darkness finally capitulated before the majestic and undeniable onslaught of Mae West.

HERE was the apocalypse. Here, in direct negation to the vamp tradition, stood, or rather swayed, the ideal of every stout middle-aged woman. *Au fond*, Mae West has much in common with E. Miffin (Mrs.), Nathaniel Gubbins' voluptuous charwoman. She is the Bermondsey beldam as she would like to see herself reflected in her husband's eye. She is the only future the chorus girl can look forward to. She is the common denominator of sex for all the men you see in a good pub. She is the Pink 'Un and *La Vie Parisienne*, but she can be left about in the drawing room, for at least she is something all women can instinctively admire, even when in her they are realising that the barmaid may be a rival. She is, in fact, the negation of the vamp.

"Come up and see me sometime"—that crooning, cynical, luscious voice could never issue from the constricted throat of Theda Bara. It is all far too practical and far too sane. It could, in fact, happen. The fact has finally slain the dream. Pearls, velvet, divans, they have their practical uses and their price at the stores. The untold riches of the vamp have crumbled into dust; the long cigarette holder and the beckoning sinuous arm are the prerogative of Hal Roach. In denying them the movies lost a great quality.

So perhaps we should be grateful to Seldes for explaining that Theda Bara's real name was Theodosia Goodman, and that she came from Cincinnati. It makes the nostalgic pangs a great deal easier to bear, and we may with greater comfort subside (only too metaphorically) into the capacious bosom of the Golden West.

EDITORIAL

Manners of Debate

BY the time this number appears much of the committee work on the Cinematograph Films Bill in the British Parliament will have been done and discussion of particular amendments over. Whatever the final decisions may be, it is worth recording that in the second reading debate the institution of Parliament came out with great distinction. The subject of the Bill is highly technical and complicated, involving many warring interests and only half concealing many warring tempers. Interests as divergent as the American renters, the British circuit exhibitors and the independent producers had pestered the press and the House with their pleas, some of them with a desperation born of a fear of annihilation; and this was bound to confuse the majority of Members. They could hardly, we thought, be expected to catch the balance of a situation which had defied the trained observers in the film industry itself. It was not the least of the compliments paid to our expert observers and to this paper that what they had written and we had published became the backbone of the debate.

The debate did not demonstrate any mass enthusiasm on the part of members. The fact that the cinema affects the minds and views of twenty million constituents every week, was not reflected in the attendance. Save the President of the Board of Trade and his colleague of Overseas Trade, no Minister was present. The Dominions Office found no interest in a Bill which must affect Empire relations closely. Education and agriculture showed no special concern for a medium which has served them eagerly and could serve them more. At times the House might have been counted out.

The bald head of the Leader of the Opposition was, one might say, the only gracious tribute among the seniors to the importance of the occasion.

But still, this Parliamentary thing worked. Wading laboriously for five hours through eighteen mostly dull speeches, it got all the right things said and all the right emphases laid, and something like a wise balance of opinion suggested. A painful and polite process it may be, and it is difficult to imagine the average lunatic of the film world being patient enough to endure it, but on this example Parliament had nothing so much to give the film industry as an appreciation of its methods and its manners. Even if the Films Commission does not emerge from the Committee—and this paper has pleaded for it from the first—either the Government or the film industry must come sooner or later to create its like.

Film Institute—Xmas Greeting

EIGHTEEN months ago Mr. Oliver Bell was introduced as the new manager of the British Film Institute. We were, we confess, gently sceptical of anyone quickly clearing

up the infernal mess into which the Institute had got itself. One Governor of the Institute was bold enough to agree with us, if not as to the scepticism, at least as to the mess. Old readers will particularly remember how we inveighed against the "pelican" tactics of the Institute. We told it to do something before it permitted itself the pretence of representing anything so important as the educational and cultural aspects of the film.

In eighteen months, this Mr. Oliver Bell has made an historic difference. A few unregenerate elements still exist, and still, at times, the Institute puts itself in the position of trying to represent where it has done no work to deserve. But it is now well thought of; its Committees do useful work; its encouragement of the film in educational circles, if unspectacular, is as persistent as its finances allow; its cheap publicities and braggings of earlier days have given place to quiet and considered services of research and information; there is a progressive air about its policies which inspires wider support among workers in the field; the personnel of its Governors, like the personnel of its management, commands greater confidence. The Institute is founded, and is working, and will be with us for good. This is worth recognising, particularly by those trade bodies who, suspicious in the past, may not have followed its later growth.

World Film News prides itself in being the organ of the progressive wing of the educational and cultural cinema. But it is glad to make these acknowledgments and particularly glad to congratulate Mr. Oliver Bell on the canny and essentially right policy he has pursued.

He will pardon us, however, if we encourage his institution to keep on the move. The National Film Library is, for all the Institute may pretend, still very much of an empty name. It needs more money and a clear unequivocal policy which we can support. Relations with other groups in the same field, like the Joint Committee of the Department of Overseas Trade, Travel Association and British Council, the Imperial Institute, the Substandard Cinematograph Association and, not least, the documentary and amateur film movements, are still undefined. We hope, there is no remainder in this of the foolish old hope of magically swallowing the lot. Though representations have been made, and completely understood, no Governor to-day represents the educational and documentary film interests which have been responsible for creating, and even now are maintaining, the very field which the Institute seeks to represent. Here, again, we hope there is no remainder of the previous policy.

Indeed, with all the compliments paid, there are many things to be looked to, and the secret of each solution is the development of a true spirit of co-operation on the part of the Institute. We have every belief that the Governors and Mr. Bell will make this spirit effective in the Institute's decisions.

World Film News

AND TELEVISION PROGRESS
(INCORPORATING CINEMA QUARTERLY)

Vol. 2 No. 9

December 1937

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HOLD your HOSSES!

the CIRCUS

is

Coming to TOWN

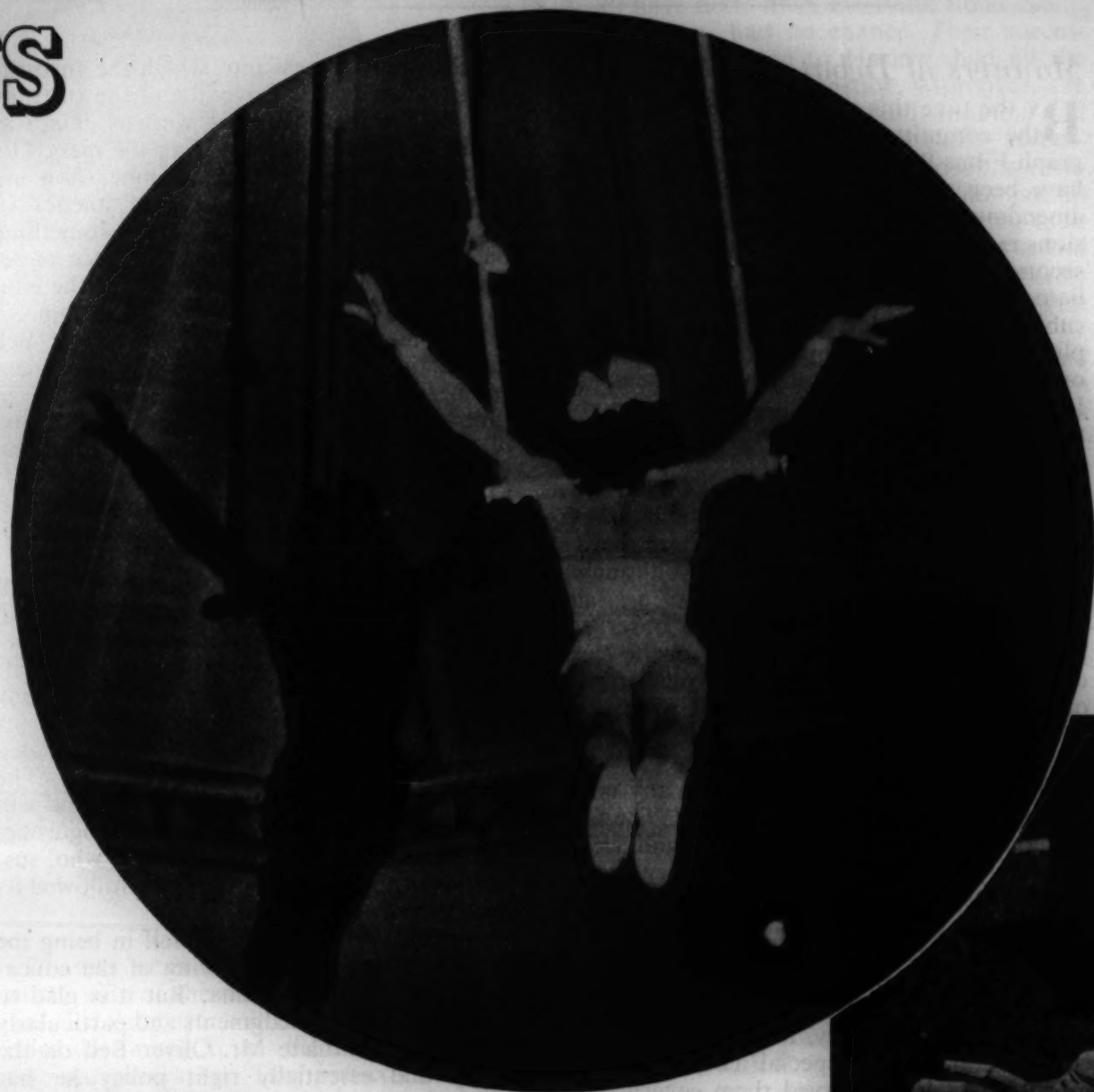
THERE are two circuses. One descends from the spectacle of Rome: the other from the patches of Punchinello. One fills the arena with glittering spectacle: the other is of the hedgerows. The arena safely housed in palaces of stone and lime has all the obvious efficiencies of the Metropolitan Police; the travelling ring has all the careless bravery of the strolling player. One could go on developing this distinction, becoming subtle and perhaps even philosophical, but it is not worth while. The important point for the circus fan is that this fact of two circuses means two fevers.

There is first the Spring fever. When the first buds are springing in the hedgerows the circus fans know that in the by-ways of the English counties caravans are already trundling the road. Green and red and yellow paint is being geometrically applied to truck wheels. Costumes are being patched. Animals are being put through their paces in the practice rings. Elephants stagger the waltz. High school horses trip the minuet. Sea lions brush up *Yankee Doodle* on the trumpets. The smell of the circus—the acrid smell from cages, the scent of hay from the stables, and the old passing smell of paraffin from the flares—float down from the lanes of the countryside.

The second fever is the Christmas one. When the nights are dark and holly and mistletoe have appeared in Oxford Street, we know that the arenas are being set up in Olympia and the Agricultural Hall. Bertram Mills is dusting his grey topper, and Carl Hagenbeck is cracking his whip.

Something like a big top is being hoisted. Fresh sawdust is being sprinkled—a carpet for horses, elephants and zebras. Performers are rehearsing. The fairy-lights of Oxford Street swing in the breeze to remind us that trapeze artists are trying out their new tricks. A man in the gutter selling comic noses reminds us that the clowns are trying out their oldest antics once again. A cracked trumpet by a theatre queue brings a whiff of the harsh music which will usher in the biggest show on earth to a hundred rings in a few days.

The Circus fever is on!



I SUPPOSE the modern circus takes its lead on animals from Rome. Lions, tigers, elephants were the stand-bys of Nero's manager, and they are the mainstay of Carl Hagenbeck's. They appeal on two scores. One is the fascination of fear. Few of us, even in these presumably sophisticated days, can resist the vicarious thrill. It is part of the stock-in-trade of most drama—the heroine and the circular saw—the face at the window, the haunted house, Karloff—in all these we share terror. So too with the lion-tamer. We share his bravery, but we imagine his fear. The excitement is of real tooth and claw. There is no deceptive film of celluloid between.

A few superior persons hurl the word sadism at the circus audience. But in this connection I am always reminded of that disciple of St. Augustine who was dragged to the circus against his will. He shut his eyes and refused to look at the performance. Off his guard for a moment, he sneaked a look. He was fascinated. He kept on looking. He came back many times.

The second appeal of the animals is skill. I have seen school teachers breaking their hearts teaching children to read and write, to acquire skill in crafts, to run, jump and hurdle. How much more baffling it must be to

teach a horse to waltz, or a monkey to drink tea with rudimentary manners. It is clever, bafflingly clever. And we come, year after year, to marvel.

* * *

The first heart-aches of most small boys are on account of the Queen of the Circus—the ballerina—the lightest, daintiest, fluffiest little lady of two continents. She is dressed in a ballet skirt of white or pale pink. She is blonde. She has a blue ribbon in her hair, and provided that you are not too near the ring-side, she is a vision of loveliness. Her horse is a dazzling white. She is the second turn on the bill. Six pencils of white light follow her ride

round the ring. She rides sideways without a saddle with one hand raised in salute. She rises and trips a simple step on the broad back of her horse. She lightly leaps ribbons festooned from the centre of the ring. Then she disappears beyond the curtain, but stays as a picture in the minds of little boys. She is a symbol of the make-believe of the circus.

THE figure common to all circuses is the clown. No circus, in city or village, can be a circus without the clown. His appeal is something which hardly bears talking about. It is so real, yet so elusive. It is a mixture of the broadest slapstick and the subtlest gesture, of heartrending bravery and the deepest pathos. I did not see the greatest clowns. I did not see Grock. I did not see the Fratellini. I did not see Whimsical Walker. My younger and provincial world is one of Pimpo, Doodles, Toto, Noni and their lesser lights. The greatest clown I ever saw (and I refuse to believe that there was ever a greater) was Otto Giebling.

On one occasion I had to change trains in the Middle West. Cole Brothers Circus was in town. I had just time to see part of the show before my train time. The circus had started when I took my seat. A high wire act had

he became bored. He shifted restlessly from one knee to the other. He leaned his head first on one hand, then on the other. He wriggled and turned. I became fascinated and can remember no more of the Indian antics.

Slowly from an inside pocket he produced a deck of cards. He shuffled them. Slowly and systematically he laid them out for a game of patience. He was alone. The Indians no longer existed. The circus had ceased to exist. He was alone in a lonely world. Only once did he lift his eyes and that was just before he cheated. That one glance convinced him that he was alone and he quietly changed the position of two cards.

I have seen Giebling since. Once I saw him in a three-ring circus. His pathetic figure, ill-clad in clothes made for someone else, made its way to a vacant ring. Quietly he sat cross-legged in the centre and took a large sheet of newspaper from that capacious pocket and made a fire. He lit the fire and warmed his hands at its brief flame. For a moment he was all the poor souls in the world who are looking for fires at which to warm their starved hands. It wasn't the least bit funny, but it had a flash of the humanity of all great clowns.

Giebling too was an example of the pre-

posterous incongruity associated with the clown. On occasions he will become a vendor of potted plants. Early in the evening he appears with a modest fern in a small pot. He tries in vain to sell it to a lady by the ringside. At the next interval he appears with a slightly larger plant and mutely appeals to the same lady. Again he turns back—the rebuffed salesman. At each appearance he carries a still larger plant. But always that pathetically unsuccessful appeal. His last appearance is made tottering under a gigantic palm tree. He is an uproariously comic figure as he staggers up to the lady of his particular attentions and offers what must be the very-last-one-I-have-lady-and-cheap-too-lady.

If I see a clown just half as good as Otto Giebling this Christmas I shall be well pleased.

THE Circus is in town—the biggest show on earth—the big top is hoisted—the clown's paint is fresh—the ballerina's spangles are glittering—high-spirited horses are pawing the sawdust—the elephants are stamping—the high wires are taut—roll up! Roll up!—the ring master, sprig and erect, is in the ring—Ladies and Gentlemen!—in-tro-dooc-ing—The Circus!



craned all necks. All breaths were held as flying figures flashed white against the dun of the canvas. White pencils of light followed them as they sailed perilously through the air, performing some daring thrill for the first time in any ring. There was a gasp of relief as the white figures slid down the ropes to pose in the floodlit ring while the applause rang out. The next turn was a wild affair of Indians, of fire and feathers and paint. While the braves pranced and whooped, my eyes drifted to the edge of the ring, where a solitary figure was kneeling with his elbows on the ring. For a while he was absorbed by this pageant of colour and movement. Then

Photographs, Dorien Leigh

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Garbo and the night watchmen



Alistair Cooke

with

“THANKS
ALISTAIR

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Otis Ferguson, Gr
Don Herold and oth
sembled around nig
Alistair Cooke's bra

ANY book that spreads the fame of Cecelia Ager is a good book, for Mrs. Ager wields the deftest and shiniest stiletto among critics East and West of the Atlantic. Marxist clownings in and about the English language are one half of the virtue of the brilliant *Variety*. Make no mistake, the other half is Cecelia.

With the light-hearted commission to talk about the gowns, corsetry, millinery and make-up of the stars, one by one she spikes them down clean between the flounce and the

furbelow. The snobbys wobbsy elegance of Constance Bennett; the clear-eyed level-headed silent sufferer of yore, which is Irene Dunne; the right dressy self-sacrifice of Kay Francis; the deafening poise of Joan Crawford, whose inferiority complex is betrayed at the last moment by the dress that fits just a teeny weeny bit too tightly across the hips; the odd dressing of Jessie Matthews, whose deep, wide-V neckline gives every knob a break; Ann Harding, so nice when scared to death but, when natural, so harrowing; the

smooth mask of Dietrich with interesting hollows in her cheeks and a pronunciation of 'yes' with a rising inflection. Then sweetly—still in that column for ladies devoted to make-up and whatnot—the piece about Robert Taylor which begins: "It used to be the girls who took the baths in pictures . . . it used to be the girls who stuck the flower between their teeth . . ."

How nice it is to know that Oxford, our Oxford, is even now "quivering to the way he wraps his robe close to his splendid chest and

S to

R COOKE

opportunity to
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hn Grierson sur-
of Cecelia Ager,
Graham Greene,
other critics as-
night watchman
brazier.

beautifully modelled loins . . . sighing as he ties his belt snug to his waist with dashing disregard of the buckle . . . learning how he coaxes with his own two hands his lustrous black hair into that proud clean-swept line." So on, each week, writing like an angel and shaming every critic who, with weightier commission, does less for criticism and less for sanity.

Otis Ferguson, critic of the *New Republic*, one had better know too. Like most Americans, and dearie me ad box office et ad nau-

seam, he is a little too anxious to be at one with the popular arts, a little too anxious not to be associated with high purpose and the intelligentsia, and terribly ashamed of crusades in a country whose maelstroms of dirty little crookery and shameful little snobberies would honour the most naïve. On the other hand, and it is the bigger hand, read his Louis-Schmeling fight for the most vivid bit of prose that ever edged its noble shoulders through the sniffling mediocrity of screen writing.

Don Herold of the *Commentator*, born at a cost of \$15, and now registering in a foreword his desire to be buried with the epitaph "Breath takes a holiday" is, thank heaven, better than his foreword. With the exception of our own Russell Ferguson, we have nobody to touch him in riding a film down, casual like. "Good sakes alive, I don't have to hire anybody to drag me to the verge of nervous breakdown: I live there"; "Lon Chaney is Clark Gable to some people: Clark Gable is Lon Chaney to me"; "It is all a business with Al Jolson: if he were manufacturing pants he would be at it just as hard"; "I may like Eddie Cantor in his old age, when he wears down"; "The name Annabella is a mistake: it sounds as if it belonged to a muscle bound dancer in a carnival tent"; or, of a Noel Coward film, "It starts in Oscar Wildey and finishes up Eugene O'Neil screwy, with Noel Coward talking to himself over his shoulder." That is the Don Herold style: personal, familiar, amusing and with a capacity to read fast which is the self desired peak of American journalism. But wings over not so much, and on pretending it.

The worst of political reviewing is that the two very different standards of æsthetic (long term) and practical or political (short term) judgment, get mixed—and never so mixed are they as with Robert Forsythe of the *New Masses*. *Chapaiev* is a hat in the air and the long boredom of mere huzzas; but, when the red rag is not displayed before the bull, which unfortunately is most of the time, there is no one in the collection more penetrating. No one has written more intelligently in praise of Mae West, or described the foibles of England more gaily, or so exquisitely thought of comparing our Mr. Charles Morgan—Sweet Thames run softly—to Cecil B. De Mille. A social sense is a good slave but a bad master when it comes to the measurement of art and the difference probably in a sense of humour. Robert Forsythe has three parts of that and is, therefore, blessed among bolsheviks; but if you count salvationism the dope of criticism, he presents an interesting demonstration of the brightened eye, the tautened muscle, and the feverish gesture of hallelujah.

The weight of the book lies between this *Chapaiev* worst of Robert Forsythe, and Don Herold's snappy best, and is represented, let it be whispered, by our own Robert Herring, Graham Greene and John Marks, with considerable aid from Meyer Levin of *Esquire*. And, ironically, Alistair Cooke when he is not admiring the Americans too much to forget to be English, is, as we all know, not so bad at that. In fact when the good writing

and the wisecracking are over, there is relief in criticism which is plumb old-fashioned, good and thoughtful, with a high wall behind it: even if, or perhaps especially if, it has sixteenth-century knobs to it. One thinks of Otis Ferguson's brilliant description of Joe Louis and the sentence "Speed and weight, without the special slugger's leverage in the muscles of the shoulder and back, are no good." The Americans have all the speed and, to be true, some of the weight; but when it comes to special slugger's leverage one is inclined to remember what Graham Greene did the other day to Louis B. Mayer.

No, Lejeune is not in the book. This paper has had its good clean fun with Lejeune and no hard feelings, one hopes. But let it be recorded here, as Cooke's introduction should have recorded, that a selection of professional film criticism is silly without her. We all raise our voices periodically to say that she is everything by starts and nothing long, that she is apt to go off at half cock, that she is sometimes, women fashion, no gentleman, and can't get into a scrap without pulling someone's hair and being sorry for it. Breath takes a holiday for Don Herold, but no such nonsense about our Lejeune, not in fifteen years. She has been, of all the film journalists, the best journalist, and of all the critics, this side or that, she has done the greatest single service to the cause of the cinema. Heaven knows, knowing Lejeune, that it may be all Lejeune's fault, but in case it isn't, Alistair Cooke is not going to get by without this balancing word.

THANKS to him nevertheless for the first opportunity to put the critics themselves under the scalpel and for the fine writing and of such variety he has gathered in. Cooke, as ever, is not so much Catholic in his taste as Anglo Catholic, with a foot in both camps and doubt between. One sees how he admires the American wisecracking style and how, possibly, he does worse and falls for it. Indeed one prays that the emigration to America, which he records in his foreword so cheerfully for him and so sadly for us, may not turn out to be a symbolic surrender to the twinkly lights which, though they brighten the path of film criticism, do not make the substance of it. That substance at its best is a kind of leadership which, dashing about decoratively to attract attention, must still be judged by where it leads. It is all very well for the watchmen to sit by their fires and gaze at Garbo and the night stars; it is also their job to be round and about looking to the property. But if all the critics did that, *World Film News*, I fear, would have to keep them—and not forgetting Mrs. Don Herold who, her husband blithely tells us, is too weighty a bride these days to carry across the threshold.

An extract from Otis Ferguson's review of the Louis-Schmeling fight is printed on pages 24 and 25.

"AHCTING?" repeated the short sandy-haired man, and the soft caressing voice dropped to a sonorous bass. "Ahcting is a gift of God. So what would I be doing *talking* about ahcting?"

The tired dreamy blue eyes perused the image in the long mirror, and Mr. Sinclair put a little more black on the right eyebrow. "I've been acting all my life. Y'know I was at the Ahbbey Theaytre with Lady Gregory and Mr. Yeats and Mr. Synge. (Such a nice quiet gentleman! If he hadn't been stricken down with illness, he'd have been writing greater plays than even he did. Y'know it was Mr. Yeats met him in Pah-ris and told him to go home and write about Ireland.) We were a quarter century ahead of our times at the Abbey, and Mr. Synge, he was haff a century ahead. We tried to forget about ahcting when we were on the stage. Well, ye can't *really* do that. Ye can't be forgetting an audience altogether now. But we were after pretending that the stage was a room without one of its walls. We would be turning our backs to the audience, and pausing, and slurring our speech. All that, y'see, helps to bring out character. But when people come and are after asking me questions about my timing and pauses an' all that, I don't know how to be answering them. I can *do* it. It comes natural, *feels* right, to be holding a moment," and with the actor's interest in his own craft, Mr. Sinclair watched himself in the mirror holding a fragment of Time, "but I can't be talking about that sort of thing. So don't you be after making me seem to be laying down the law. Some interviews about me have made me *blosh*. If there's one thing I hate it's being egoteestical.

"Now in feelms," he said, putting on his waistcoat (for there is but half an hour to his entrance in *Wanted for Murder*), "ye can't be pausing, or slurring your speech, or moving about. Film audiences won't stand for it. They want everything quick, quick. Mind ye, it's good in some ways. Ye've got to use your wits when you go to a feelm these days. And the feelms, they've woken the theaytre up too. Look at *Wanted for Murder*. It's modern, realistic, nothing like *The Worst Woman in Town* sort of show that the brothers Melville used to put on, with all that pomdiddy pom-pom stuff," and with grandiose gesture he imitated the sonorous basso profundo of some green-limed Jasper.

"But ye know there are too many changes all at once these days. It's not healthy. There we were for hundreds of years, getting used to one change before the next one came along. And now everything's changing all the time. Ye know, I think we've all gone crazy in the last thirty years. Give me the old books, Wilkie Collins, and Dickens, and Bulwer Lytton, and the days before the War.

"It's true audiences wouldn't be making the fuss nowadays they did when *The Playboy of the Western World* was first put on in Dublin and New York. Of course, the opposition there was organised. Ridiculous it was. I saw a man outside the Abbey Theaytre handing round tickets to toughs so that they could go inside and make a row. The first night in New York wasn't so bad—just a hiss or two, you know. But the second night, we could hardly hear ourselves speak. So one of us went on after the first act and said: 'Ladies and Gentlemen, since we don't think you

"It's not ACTING— it's just REHEARSING"

is how Arthur Sinclair, noted
Irish player, describes screen
acting, in an interview with
Henry Adler.

should be deprived of hearing the first act through the uproar of a few, we'll be playing it to you all over again.' And we did!

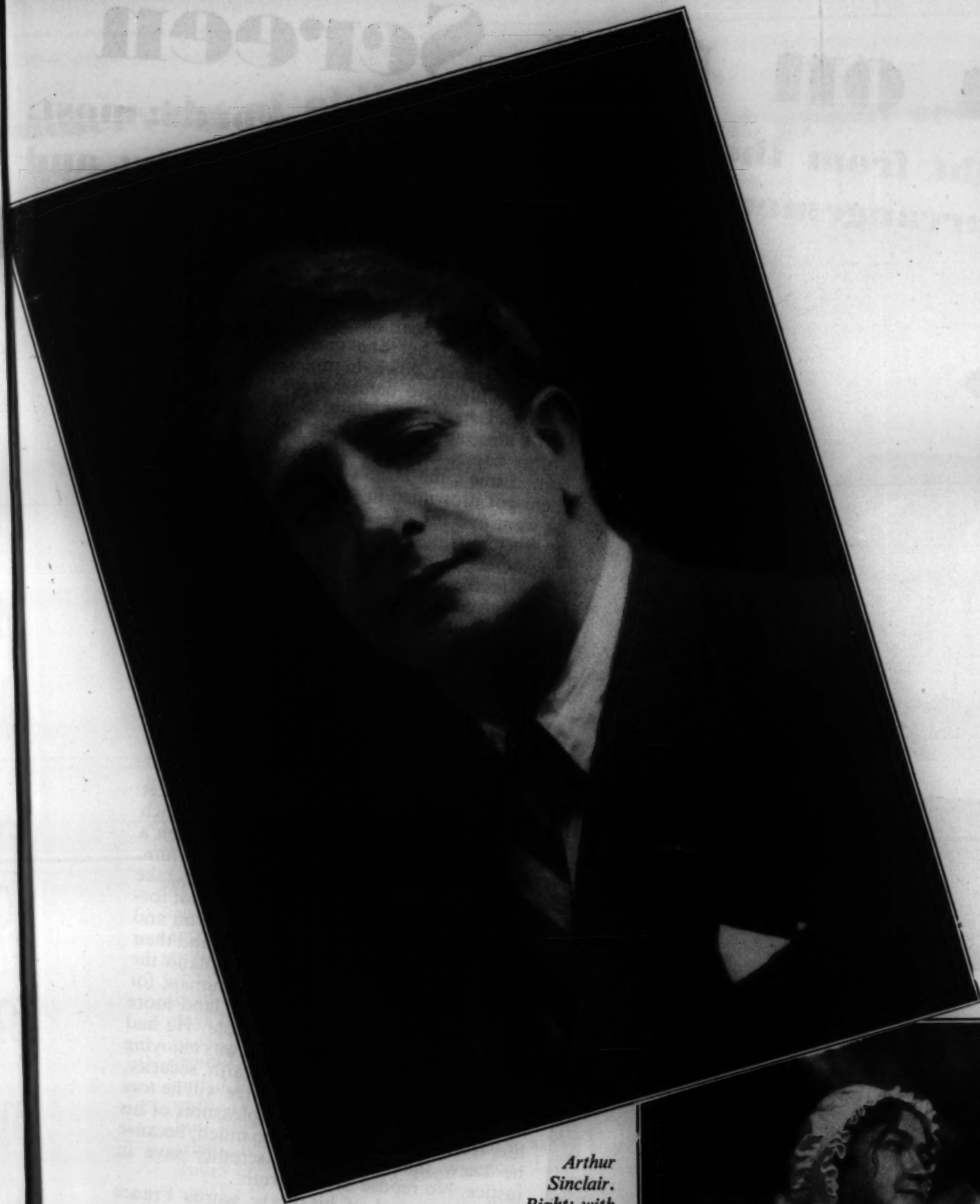
"Of course, all that fuss did the play a world of good. We got to the theaytre one day and saw newspaper placards outside: *Arrest of Irish Players*. Nothing of the sort had happened really. Some publican had sued us for immorality. All we had to do was to go in court for a few minutes. What was after worrying the publican was the boy and girl being together at the end of Act One. Our counsel said: 'Here is the script. What does it say? The girl says: "May God give you a good rest till I call you in the morning when the cocks will crow." And she goes into her room. The boy says: "May God bless you and reward you for your kindly talk . . . I'm thinking this night wasn't I a foolish fellow not to kill my father in the days gone by." And down comes the curtain. Now what on earth is there immoral in that?' Well, d'ye know what that publican said? He said: 'That's it! What we want to know is: What happened after the curtain came down?'

"BUT ye know, you lose something by being so quick and clear-cut on the feelms. Ye can't bring out character unless you can stop

and hesitate and slur your speech and turn your back to the audience sometimes. And how about poetry? Would feelm audiences stand an hour of that slaw rhythmic speech of Synge's? Ye say that Donat recites Browning in *Knight Without Armour*. I haven't seen it, nor the Shakespeare feelms. Mind ye, I quite like films. I like to drop into a picture but I don't go often and I'm not crazy about acting for 'em. I've done film acting here, but I turned down an offer to go to Hollywood, and I'm quite glad I did. Y'see film acting is all so much in snippets—ye can't get into your stride. It's not acting—it's . . . it's . . . just *rehearsing*.

"And ye can't use gesture so much. It's the same in broadcasting. I played Bottom in the radio *Midsummer Night's Dream*. There we were, Fay Compton, Frank Collier and the rest of us strung out in front of the mike reciting off bits of paper. Mind ye, I like broadcasting. But I want to play Bottom on the stage where ye've got a chance to move about and use your hands and face.

"Timing is the trouble on films. Ye've got to be quick, but ye mustn't be too quick. Comedy, for example. How're ye going to know exactly when to wait for a laugh, and how long? That's where the stage actor has it



Arthur
Sinclair.
Right: with
Anna Neagle in
"Peg of Old Drury"

over the film star. Even with matinee audiences, which are the deadest of the lot, ye've got something that'll respond, if ye keep on long enough and don't get discouraged. They'll be teaching ye something about the play all the time. I've rehearsed a play for laughs at certain lines, and then the audience goes and laughs at lines I didn't think had laughs in 'em at all. That's the way we learn about a play from night to night. No two audiences laugh at exactly the same points. So we can keep altering and adjusting.

"Now ye can't be judging that on films. The Marx Brothers, for instance. They try to wait on lines they think'll fetch laughs. But they don't, they can't, judge accurately. You either kill one laugh by running it on to

another, or bore your audience by slackening the pace when there is no laugh. Especially in farce! Ye see in farce ye mustn't give the audience time to think, because there isn't anything to think about. It's pace, pace, all the time. Ye've got to keep the lines 'up'. Overlapping, ye see what I mean? I saw quite an able musical star, playing in quite a good farce. He started off all right, but then he let the pace get slower and slower, until someone threw a penny on the stage. Now, how'r ye going to know in films how fast or slow to go so that the audience can respond to the play?

"AND another thing I don't like about films is this star system. Ye do your best work, and then when ye see the film, ye find your best work has been cut out because they've altered the balance of the play for a star. There's a bit too much of this sort of thing,"—and he fluttered his fingers in a manner expressive of the snipping of scissors. "Look what they did to O'Casey—a lovely writer.

"Well, look what happened to *The Plough and the Stars*, a lovely play, better even than *Juno and the Paycock* in my opinion, and it was more popular in New York. O'Casey wrote it for a cast, not a star. Either the whole cast are stars, or there isn't any star. The old rule was not to bring important characters on too early, but O'Casey shows Fluther mending a door right at the rise of the curtain. But the film people took the play, pulled Barbara Stanwyck into the foreground, and pushed the rest of the cast back, and upset the whole balance of the play. Let them write plays for stars if they want to, but need they alter the plays written with a different idea?

"Mind ye," he said, putting on his bowler hat, for he had received the first call for his entrance, "I quite like films. But give me the stage first."



Speech on the Screen

Sound has brought from the cinema a spate of words; most, memorable for arrangement, for sentiment, for beauty; and



Banjo on my Knee

Walter Brennan as Newt Holley.
(Screenplay by Nunnally Johnson).

NEWT: I'm getting to be a pretty old rooster, you know. I'm near onto seventy year old. But there ain't but one more thing in this earth that deep down in my heart I really wish I could have before I go, that I been wishing I had for a long, long time—and that's a—grandbaby—a little fellow to carry on my name. Once I had six chillen of my own. Ernie's the last of 'em; all the rest of them got drowned in the river, the way my pa went and his pa—and the way I'm gonna go when my time comes; but right now I don't care. Outside of this ole boat I ain't got a thing in the world to pass on down to my grandbaby 'cepting the sweetest piece of music I know. That's what I have been saving the St. Louis Blues for. That's why I want you to drink a toast to it—because when you drink to it, why you're drinking to my grandbaby.

The Life of Emile Zola

Morris Carnousky as Anatole France.
(Screenplay by Heinz Herald.)

ANATOLE FRANCE: Let us not mourn him. Let us rather salute that bright spirit of his which will live for ever and like a torch enlighten a younger generation inspired to follow him. You who are enjoying to-day's freedom take to your hearts the words of Zola! Do not forget those who fought the battles for you and bought your liberty with their genius and their blood. Do not forget them and applaud the lies of fanatical intolerance! Be human, for no man in all the breadth of our land more fervently loved humanity than Zola. He had the simplicity of a great soul. He was enjoying the fruits of his labour, fame, wealth, security, when suddenly out of his own free will he tore himself from all the peaceful pleasures of his life, from the work he loved so much, because he knew that there is no serenity save in justice. No repose save in truth...

At the sound of his brave words France awakened from her sleep. How admirable is the genius of our country. How beautiful the soul of France which for centuries taught right and justice to Europe and the world!...

France is once again to-day a country of reason and benevolence because one of her sons through an immense work and a great action gave rise to a new order of things based on justice and the rights common to all men!

Let us not pity him because he suffered and endured. Let us envy him! Let us envy him because his great heart won him the proudest of destinies. He was a moment of the conscience of man!

Night Mail

A documentary of the Post Office.
(Verses written by W. H. Auden).

This is the night mail crossing the border,
Bringing the cheque and the postal order,
Letters for the rich, letters for the poor,
The shop at the corner and the girl next door,
Pulling up Beattock, a steady climb—
The gradient's against her but she's on time.

Past cotton grass and moorland boulder,
Shovelling white steam over her shoulder,
Snorting noisily as she passes
Silent miles of wind-bent grasses;
Birds turn their heads as she approaches,
Stare from the bushes at her blank-faced
coaches;

Sheepdogs cannot turn her course
They slumber on with paws across,
In the farm she passes no one wakes,
But a jug in a bedroom gently shakes.

ost,
and

deserving of oblivion; but some
from these we make a verse and prose selection

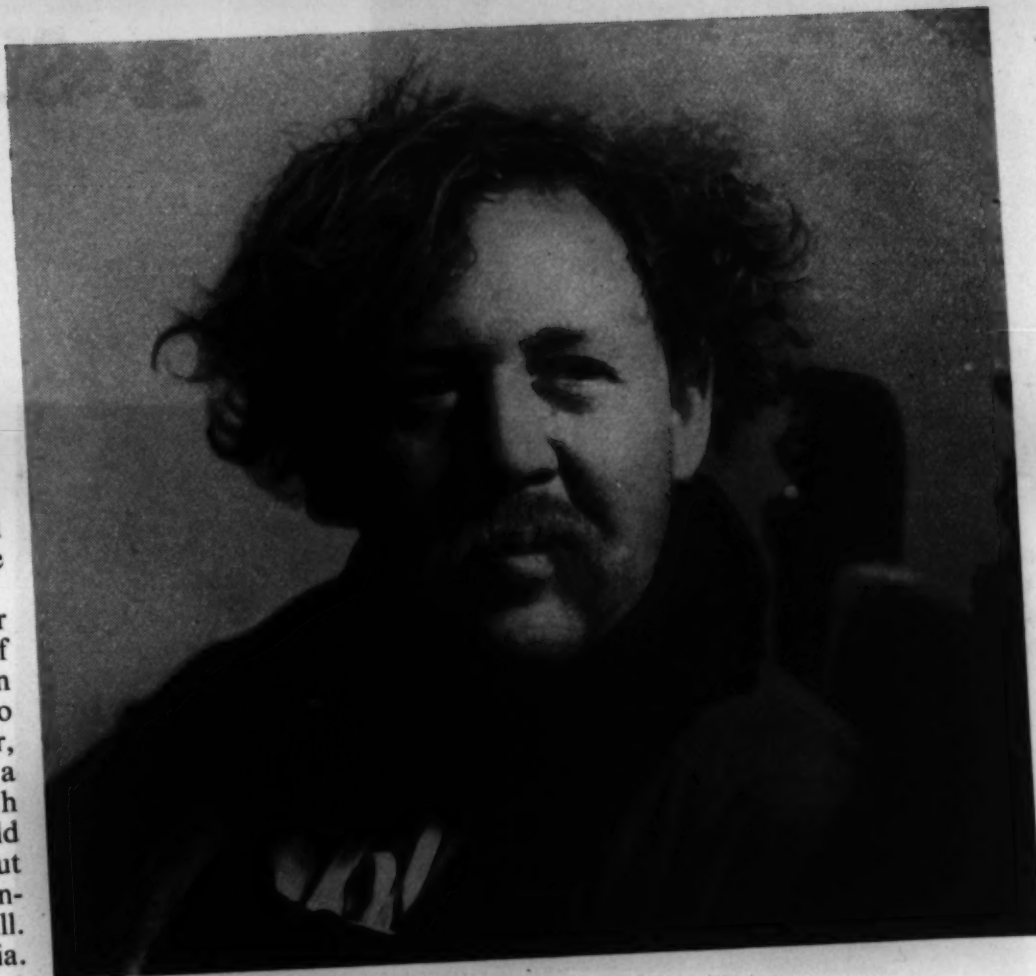
Rembrandt

Charles Laughton as Rembrandt van Rijn.

(Dialogue by Lajos Biro and Arthur Winteris).

REMBRANDT: A creature, half-child, half-woman, half-angel, half-lover, brushed against him, and of a sudden he knew that when one woman gives herself to you, you possess all women—women of every age and race and kind—and, more than that, the moon, the stars, all miracles and legends are yours: the brown-skinned girls who inflame your senses with their play; the cool, yellow-haired women who entice and escape you; the gentle ones who serve you; the slender ones who torment you; the mothers who bore and suckled you—all women whom God created out of the teeming fullness of the earth are yours in the love of one woman.

Throw a purple mantle lightly over her shoulders, and she becomes a Queen of Sheba; lay your tousled head blindly upon her breast, and she is a Delilah waiting to enthrall you. Take her garments from her, strip the last veil from her body, and she is a chaste Susanna covering her nakedness with fluttering hands. Gaze upon her as you would gaze upon a thousand strange women, but never call her yours—for her secrets are inexhaustible; you will never know them all. Call her by one name only; I call her Saskia.



Mr. Deeds goes to Town

Gary Cooper as Longfellow Deeds.

(Screenplay by Robert Riskin).

LONGFELLOW DEEDS: About my playing the tuba—seems like a lot of fuss has been made about that. If a man's crazy just 'cause he plays the tuba, somebody better look into it, 'cause there are a lot of tuba players running around loose. Of course, I don't see any harm in it. I play mine whenever I want to concentrate. That may sound funny to some people, but most everybody does something silly when they're thinking. For instance, the Judge here is an O-filler . . . You fill in all the spaces in the O's with your pencil. I was watching you.

That may make you look a little crazy, Your Honour, just sitting around filling in O's, but I don't see anything wrong. 'Cause that helps you think. Other people are doodlers. . . That's a name we made up back home for people who make foolish designs on paper while they're thinking. It's called doodling. Most everybody is a doodler. Did you ever see a scratch pad in a telephone booth? People draw the most idiotic pictures when they're thinking. Dr. Fraser, here, could probably think up a long name for it, 'cause he doodles all the time. If Dr. Fraser had to doodle to help him think, that's his business—everybody does something different. Some people are . . . ear-pullers, some are nail-biters. That man there—Mr. Semple—is a nose-twitcher. The lady with him is a knuckle-cracker. So you see, Your Honour, everybody does funny things to help them think. Well, I play the tuba.



Coal Face

Poetic treatment of Coal Mining.

(Verses written by W. H. Auden).

O lurcher-loving collier black as night
Follow your love across the smokeless hill;
Your lamp is out and all your cages still;
Course for her heart and do not miss,
For Sunday soon is passed and Kate, fly not
so fast,
For Monday comes when none may kiss—
Be marble to his soot and to his black be
white.



TWELVE MONTHS

A Survey of March of Time

By Richard de



Above: Recently elected Mayor of New York City, La Guardia formed the subject of one of March of Time's most successful releases this year.



Above: Kemal Ataturk, subject of *Father of All Turks*, compels the entire population of Turkey to learn the Latin alphabet in place of the complicated Arabic script.



Left: An Englishman's view of Hollywood—the lobby of the Chinese Theatre with the footprints of Jean Harlow.

Right: A picture from *War in China*, March of Time's survey of Chinese progress and Japanese attack.



Now that the time has come to add up the score for March of Time's activities in Britain during the past year, one thing becomes apparent. Novelty is no longer an element in the success of March of Time films. In providing a more penetrating survey of national and world events, it has filled a definite want among film audiences.

The March of Time has not hesitated to renew itself, change its pace, try new methods. A remarkable variety of subject matter has been covered in twelve months by the British unit. Early in the year there was *Black Areas*, a stark reportage of conditions in the coal-mining districts. More frivolous, perhaps, but equally pointed, was the analysis of some of the effects of *D.O.R.A.* on the life of the ordinary citizen. The sequence on Scotland, with particular reference to the *Highlands* problem, was produced by Edgar Anstey and received much comment both in the national and the Scottish press as a serious and direct study of a troubling national problem. In the lighter vein was the sequence on a Britisher's reactions to *Hollywood*, which in a degree formed the sequel to an earlier M.O.T. story on Britain's own Hollywood, at that time going full blast.

Latest from the British production unit is the March of Time story on *Oxford*, bringing in the University Appeal, and, of course, the spectacular benefactions of Lord Nuffield, who appears in the film with Lord Halifax, the Chancellor. Notable "firsts" in this subject include the first filming of the Encenia ceremony, first re-enactments made at the University with complete co-operation from the authorities, first appearance of Lord Nuffield in a directed film. The finished film has received the approval of the University, with no cuts necessary, and M.O.T. is proud that it has found news value in a British institution which other producers have long ignored.

From overseas, March of Time has brought

NTHS of TIME

of Time's Third Year

de Rochemont

to its British public the first analysis of *John L. Lewis*, and his cataclysmic C.I.O.; studies of Kemal Ataturk, *Father of all Turks*, and the economic side of that thrifty, self-reliant and close-knit religious organisation, *The Church of Jesus Christ of the Latter-Day Saints*; two graphic and illuminating subjects on the place of *Poland* in the picture of the coming war, and what *China* faces in the present one; and finally a detailed, intimate record of *Fiorello La Guardia*, reforming Mayor of New York, recently re-elected in a landslide vote.

It is a matter of record that more and better theatres are playing *March of Time* than before, and that serious critics speak of it and write of it as setting a standard for news films and for shorts in general. To-day it is working out, on a practical basis, the interchange of techniques and ideas with the American *March of Time*. Recently it sent Edgar Anstey to New York to make the liaison even closer, and brought from New York, James H. S. Moynahan, as a collaborator on scripts.

During the year, *March of Time* was forced to suspend distribution in Spain and in China, on account of war conditions. But in the same period its French edition, called "*La Marche du Temps*," got under way and is making remarkable progress in France, Belgium and Switzerland. Gilbert Comte, who worked with M.O.T. on production, became editor of the French reel. The famous French character actor Destac became the "Voice of Time", or, perhaps, "*La Voix du Temps*". Marcel Paulis, well-known as a documentary producer on the Continent, joined up as film editor under Comte.

Two travelling production units, one under Maurice Lancaster of London, the other under Jean Pages of the Paris office, covered Scandinavia and North Africa respectively. A new unit, headed by S. R. Sozio, former editor of French Paramount News, has been set up and will be in production before the New Year.



Above: Famous for its grouse shooting, the Highlands of Scotland were another subject for *March of Time*, which shows the dire poverty of its inhabitants.



Above: Descendants of the ancient clans have clung for generations to unfriendly soil. They are faced with extremities unless help is forthcoming.



Above: Nottinghamshire miners at war with the Spencer Union; an incident in *Black Areas*.



Left: Unemployment in the Welsh coalfields.



An Innocent in Harlem

by Thomas Baird

WASHINGTON is a white man's city. It is very modern with its planned streets and government buildings. The White House, sitting like a forgotten wedding cake, dazzles in the sunlight. The capitol is like an architect's model. Everything is clean, neat and underlined like a schoolboy's prize copy-book. It is Babbitt's dream of organisation and historicity. It is quite astonishing to find pictures of the story of the Red Indian in the galleries and living negroes walking in the streets. It is more amazing to find so many negroes in the streets. They do not seem to enjoy the responsibilities which their brothers have in New York or Chicago. The clerks of Washington are white, many of the porters are white and the negroes are found mainly in the hot dog stands, behind the café bars, in the saloons, and in the gutter trades.

The negroes of Washington are subdued.

In St. Louis they strut majestically through the streets and in New York many have white collars and the air of efficient workers, or the sailor's roll of the actor off stage. In Washington they efface themselves and slink against the wall leaving the white man his fifteen sixteenths of the sidewalk.

It was the night of the Louis-Braddock fight. I was walking along Pennsylvania Avenue about nine p.m. The short dusk was passing rapidly into night. It was quiet in the parkway. I came on a taxi standing by the sidewalk with a small group gathered round its open door. From inside came the radio voice of an announcer. "Louis follows with a quick left. It's close fighting now. A short jab has sent Braddock back. He's in again. Louis took a packet there. He's hitting back." A negro on the fringe of the crowd was grinning broadly.

A hundred yards farther on a loud-speaker echoed through the emptiness of a garage. Several people were standing round the entrance listening. Two negro garage hands were sitting on the running-board of the car. They were listening intently, but their eyes kept flashing a smile to the group at the doorway. "Louis is handing out punishment. The white man is wavering. He has more than he can handle in Louis. Louis is superb. He flashes his left like a panther." A negro smiles behind his hand. Another shouts "Give him hell, Joe."

I stop at a coffee stall. The hand of the negro who serves me shakes. The coffee slops over into the saucer. He doesn't care. He is back with his head down by the loud speaker. He is anxious, for Louis has taken a whack or two. "Louis is coming back again. He is on the look-out. He watches every move. He

landed one there—a chest blow. He is following up. Another and another and another. Braddock is against the ropes." The negro is smiling. There is a glint in his eye. He has tipped his white cap jauntily.

Beyond the light of the stall a few negroes are standing along the kerb. They lean forward to catch every word. It is near the end now. It won't be long. The knock-out. "Louis wins—a magnificent fight—Braddock has put up a great show, but Joe Louis is still champion—a master fighter—superior." The white cap of the coffee stall attendant is in the air—"Superior." The negroes are dancing on the sidewalk—"Champion." Two dark girls are laughing—"Master." The only white man who says anything starts out to say something about brains and brawn, but stops and drinks his coffee when he realises that he has got the catch phrase wrong—or has he?

HARLEM is in the North of Manhattan Island. It is a fairly clearly marked district spread around Seventh Avenue from the 120's into the 130's. Most of the houses are old, the grand old houses of another day. Most of them are split up now into flats and are lived in by negro families. There are a few white people here, but in the main the whites are falling back as Harlem grows. There are a few buildings in which there are both white and black families. On the edges of Harlem are some coffee-coloured children.

* * *

The Apollo is at 125th Street. It is a music hall-cum-picture palace. It is Wednesday night in mid-July. The sun has been blazing all day and the street is full of motionless hot air. The pavement is hot through my shoes. Two signs flash on the far side of the Apollo—LOUIS BRADDOCK FIGHT NEWSREEL and AMATEUR NIGHT. As white visitors we are encouraged to take a box. We pass down a dark passage and mount to our coign of vantage perched by the side of the stage. One can see the house and the stage. The feature picture is just ending and the audience is silent. They are not very interested, they are here for one purpose, to see the prince of all negroes, the man who has brought more prestige than any other, Joe Louis.

In the half-light I see a battery of black faces up-turned to the screen, passive and expectant. Cigarette tips gleam in the dark and smoke curls up into the beam from the projector. The heat is terrific, and I shed my coat and collar and tie. The expectancy grows as the feature finishes. Suddenly the newsreel flashes on to the screen, the music blares out and there is a wild shout from the audience. The commentator's words are drowned. Then the shouting dies down and we can hear his introductory remarks. Then Louis appears on the screen—modest and magnificent. There is a roar of welcome; Harlem welcomes its king. The fight starts. Every blow that Louis takes is suffered by the audience; every punch that Louis delivers is acclaimed to high heaven. Then the knock-out. The audience is ecstatic. But there is something to come for which no shout is sufficient salute. The knock-out blow is shown a second time in slow motion. The poetry of perfect action is received in silent adoration.

AMATEUR night at the Apollo is in the old tradition of nothing barred. Louis's fight with Braddock was a picnic compared with the ordeal which the amateur turns must face. From my seat on the side I can see into the wings. There is a group of negroes shifting about restively. The women smooth their silks and the men pat their hair and straighten their ties. One man is biting his nails. The audience is ready. Most of them are in their shirt sleeves. There is a hubbub of chatter. The artists are ready and the master of ceremonies walks on the stage. He announces there are sixteen aspirants to fame. They will sing and dance for us and the quantity and character (with a wink) of the applause will be taken as an indication of their popularity.

The first turn is Mr. Pennsylvania Washington. He is a tenor. He walks to the centre of the stage and clutches the microphone in both hands. The orchestra starts and his thin negro falsetto shrills out "This Year's Crop of Kisses". He holds his own for two lines. Sweat is running down his face. He tightens his grip on the microphone. He knows it's coming and it does. A solitary catcall echoes from the pit, a jeer from the gallery and a howl from the whole house. He laughs just once and slinks off the stage. A couple of coloured ladies follow. They do a sister act—close harmony. They make a chorus and a verse. Then the harmony becomes not so close. Then a discord and a howl from the audience. They tilt their heads back with confidence. They can take it. The next verse will be O.K. They want another chance. But the audience doesn't want another verse.

The next is a baritone. He lasts to the end and walks off in triumph. This is a good break for the next turn, a buxom dusky belle. I know she will be a contralto and I know she will sing "Deep River". But I am wrong. She stands by the microphone and gives a dignified signal to the orchestra to commence. She then squeaks out a high soprano version of "Let's Go Slumming". But not for long. Three bars and the hooting starts. The audience is roaring; laughter, squeals, whistles, catcalls. But she sings on. I can't hear a word. It seems nothing will stop her. The M.C. tries to lead her gently by the arm. Not her. She is going to sing or die in the attempt. It looks like a death to me. The house is in an uproar. Then the last straw. A large negro, over six feet tall, dressed in magnificent robes and a turban, enters from the wings. From the folds of his robes he draws a revolver. He takes careful aim at our soprano and fires a series of loud, blank shots. The explosions drown everything and our soprano walks off in high dudgeon.

At the corner of the avenue there is a shoe-shine boy. He sits in the sun and you would think he was asleep. His back is against the wall and his head lies on his shoulder. His face is in repose. But his eyes are open. He is gazing. I look but there is nothing there, just a sidewalk sizzling in the heat. He keeps on gazing. He does not press me to have my shoes shined. He says nothing. He just gazes. But he does not shift his gaze. I wish I could see what he sees.

MY AIM IN PICTURES

We asked Darryl Zanuck to tell us what he was trying to do for the cinema. Here is his reply.

MY aim in the motion picture world is to strive to create the finest possible entertainment for the greatest number of persons throughout the world.

In many ways the production of films corresponds to other industries, but the similarity has to do mostly with the organisation and preparation of material. The finished product in Hollywood superimposes upon an industrial background the artistic temperament and interpretations of thousands of creative men and women.

Timeliness is the greatest single factor a film producer must consider. Newspaper headlines which reflect the public's pulse throughout the world are the barometers by which every alert screen executive takes his reckonings and sets his course.

Behind the smashing headlines of the first pages are the personalities and ideas which grip the imaginations of the millions. By weaving stories around those events which



make news, the screen producer creates pictures that the millions will want to see.

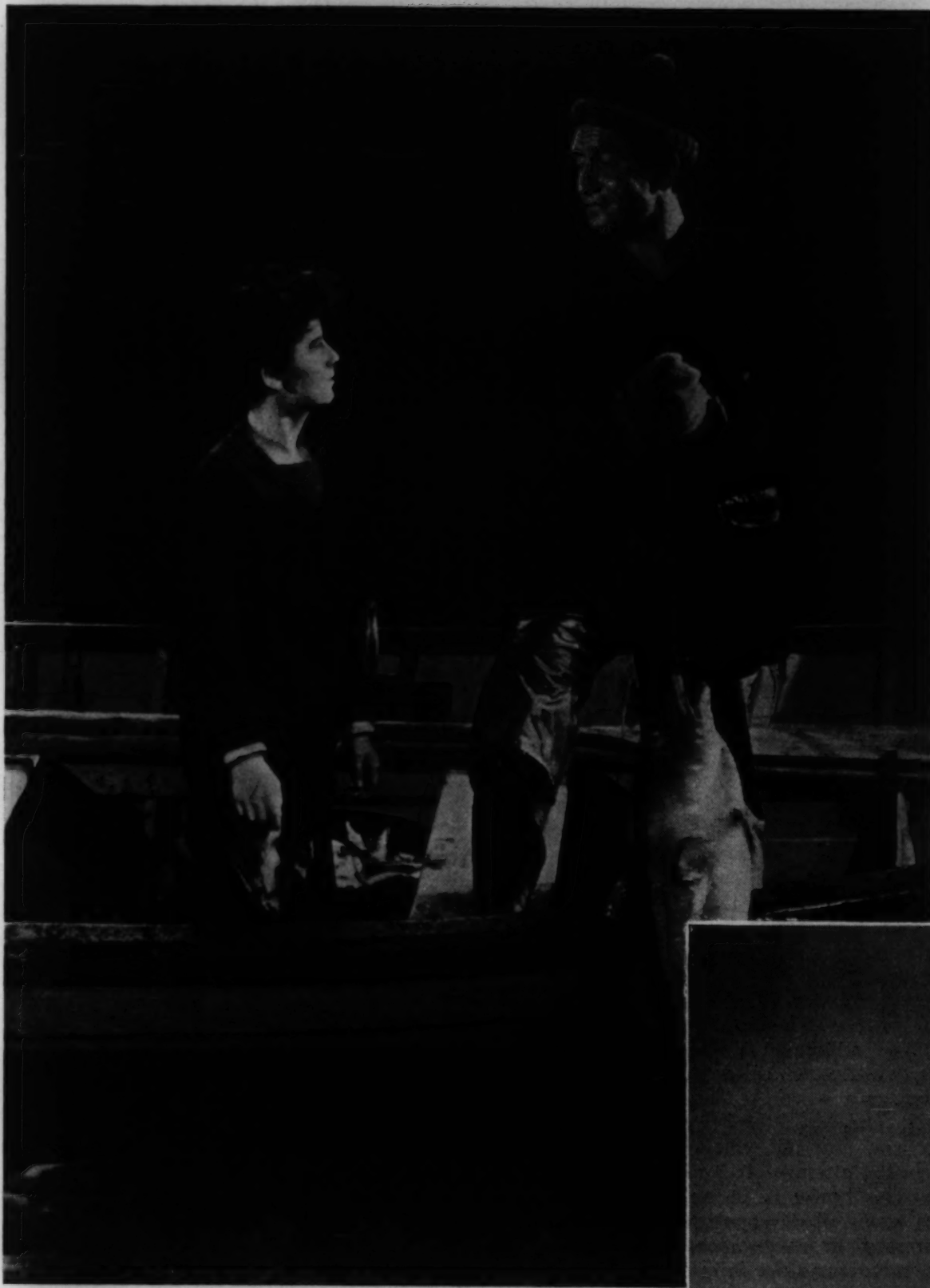
The general public is interested primarily in events that touch their lives, with which they are familiar. Films that artistically interpret them are ones that prove the most successful.

While dramatic stories are being written, each producer must continually build personalities that have ability, colour and freshness to properly and fully interpret these stories. New faces must be brought continually to the screen along with new ideas.

The public, whether in Burma, London, New York or Sydney, is interested in achievement. The dramatic history of a great institution, such as Lloyd's furnishes natural cinema material as we used in *Lloyd's of London*. We are following that same psychology in filming the powerful history of the great fire that destroyed a great American city in 1871—*In Old Chicago*. The destruction of a big city and the human courage and faith that rebuilt it are natural cinema subjects.

In improving motion pictures, the film producer must keep up with the ever-changing tastes and desires of the public throughout the world and continue to mount each picture as artistically as the subject warrants.

Captains Courageous



THIS I am told, is the film of the month among the general releases, and I believe it, though I can never find my way in the idiotic labyrinth of premières, first runs, second runs and the kind I see at the Crystal in the Borough. These, of course, are the best ones, for by the time a film gets to the Crystal the spit and polish have gone, the confidence trick of presentation and ballyhoo is an old damp squib of months ago, and *Lost Horizon*, *Deeds* and the Hoot Gibsons, they all come even at last on the bill boards. They have to talk across the hard floors and the waste spaces of the peanuts to be good, with nothing to warm them except what is inside themselves and that is as it should be. The Crystal is the place to pick the classics alright and only the elemental survives under its last ironic timeless eye.

But *Captains Courageous*, I know, will pass down the line in triumph and, except for its miserable and indeed bloody last reel, it will be for the boys of the old Dover Road what the cinema was thirty years ago to all of us in the then abandoned skating rinks. I cannot be a critic at all about the film. It has everything I asked for thirty years ago—the sea and the fishing schooners and fog on the Grand Banks and fishing cod from a dory with hand lines one after the other—and then a race between the schooners in a high wind, with noses ploughing under and throwing water high over the fo’c’sle, and the hull heeling over till it seems impossible it will ever come back, and the mast straining under the bravery of brave men, till it cracks.

"Captains Courageous": a Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer film, based on the story by Rudyard Kipling. Produced by Louis D. Lighton, directed by Victor Fleming and photographed by Harold Rosson, with Freddie Bartholomew, Spencer Tracy, Lionel Barrymore, Melvyn Douglas and Mickey Rooney.



Best Release of the Month

I confess I have been fortunate since. I have gone to sea as I vowed and fished cod one after the other with hand lines one after the other, and there isn't a whip of wind or water, or a hull heeling over so it didn't seem it would come back, that I couldn't match; and the reality was as good as the dream, as all realities are when you look into them. The only difference perhaps, that it wasn't mostly on the Grand Banks and the only fish I ever loaded into a Grand Banks schooner was some raw bootleg liquor in the days of Prohibition. But here, with *Captains Courageous*, I fall for it as hard as ever and all over again, and will quite certainly join a schooner at Gloucester, Mass., as soon as I can get there, and in spite of the Swiss advertisements and the Travel and Industrial Development Association of Great Britain and Ireland, saving their presence.

Maybe when I get to Gloucester, Mass., I shall not hold so strongly for racing till the foremast goes; and there is a point of navigational ethics in crossing a bank in a high sea, just to beat the other fellow, which I shall discuss at length, if not soberly, with the skipper. I have no doubt either, that we shall

get by without losing the brave and noble Spencer Tracy when the mast goes and indulging in a long heart-to-heart talk with him before he finally disappears below the waves. I feel certain that at the end of our trip, when we unload our cod and sell them smart, that we shall not have a grand slam burial service for the hundreds of drowned sailor-men we have left behind us, with weeping women and other nonsense stacked to the skyline, and a daft statue of an emaciated man-at-the-wheel towering over us, his eyes staring nowhere a good mariner's should. But all that is best in the film I shall have and easily; and that is how the sea is the one thing that never disappoints a man and how good a sea film *Captains Courageous* is. A bit of exaggeration perhaps at the high spots, but basically all that a fishing film should be—with everybody in their right places round the table in the saloon, and the mixture of dirt, and discipline and ribaldry just right, and none of that sissy swagger that is coming these days into every ship afloat, what with education and the cruises and the pyjama parties on the Atlantic, so there is no sea tradition left, except in the stokeholds.

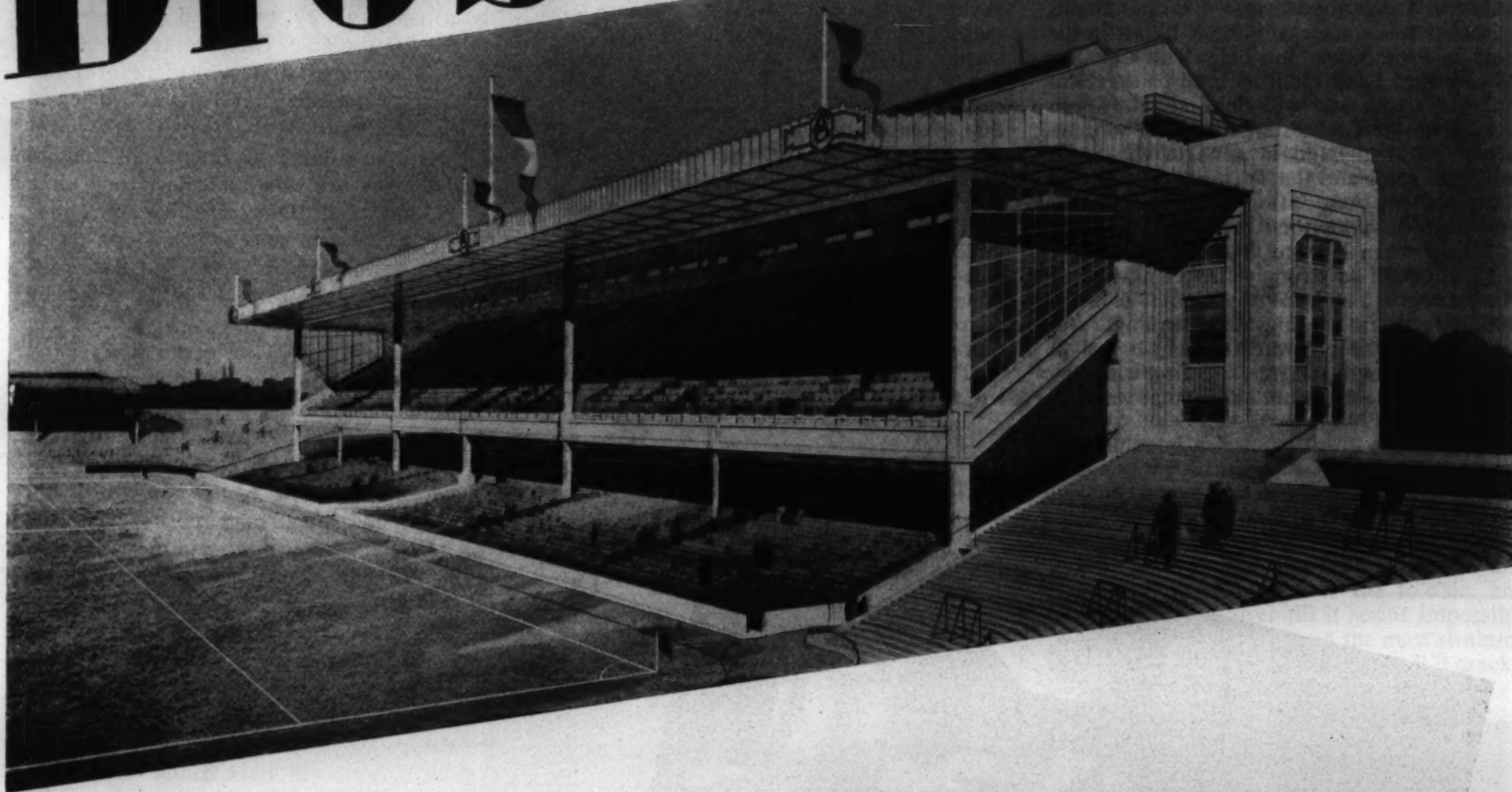
I SHOULD say that for this breath-taking reality of the sea—or, shall we say, the breath-taking reality of the romance of the sea made real—the film is better than Kipling, except that Kipling couldn't conceivably have made such an over-nauseating mess of that last reel. The Americans have handled the essential story well. The little prig of a boy who is due for salvation at the hands of fishermen, is a very son of a dog of a boy as played by Freddie Bartholomew, and his saving at the hands and heart of a Portuguese fisherman named Spencer Tracy is as nice and delicate a job of work as Spencer Tracy ever did. He even sold me a rather sappy address to the night sky and the angels and sang something about "Don't cry little fish" in a harsh and horrible voice which, I confess, is my idea of singing on the Grand Banks off Newfoundland. Only the long and dithering death of the man withdrew my loyalties. I can only explain it by saying that I don't mind old Captain Ahab dying as a hero should, when, as any fool can see, it is the time for Destiny and the Great White Whale to come for him. But watery graves, which happen by accident like and only to be sad about them, are not good fishing, nor good film, but only bad Louis B. Mayer and melodramatic slobbering of the worst. When I get to Gloucester, Mass., Louis B. Mayer will quite positively not be present. He would drown anybody, including me, for his box-office.

Victor Fleming directed and I would like to hear his explanation of how so good a film—though, you will have gathered, simple-minded—managed to foul its lines so stupidly coming into harbour. For the death of our hero is but the signal for a general collapse in which Lionel Barrymore's seamanship, good film direction and the tight little story of the making of a man, suddenly go off the earth together with Spencer Tracy. It is notorious that Americans, not content with the lugubrious sentimentality of Mothers' Day, have also created a Fathers' Day, and that is the trouble. What a people, what a people. The boy's father is brought in and there are dreadful goings on about fathers getting close to their sons, laying alongside their little hearts, close hauling their what-nots, and being pals to them, and other horrifying sickness of the sort, with the little hand finally closed in the fat sloppy hand of American paternity. Here, I regret to say, I leave the ship. Who does not know that fathers, like skippers, exist to slam hell out of their sons—and sons, fathers?

John Grierson



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Heroes are Hard to Find nowadays

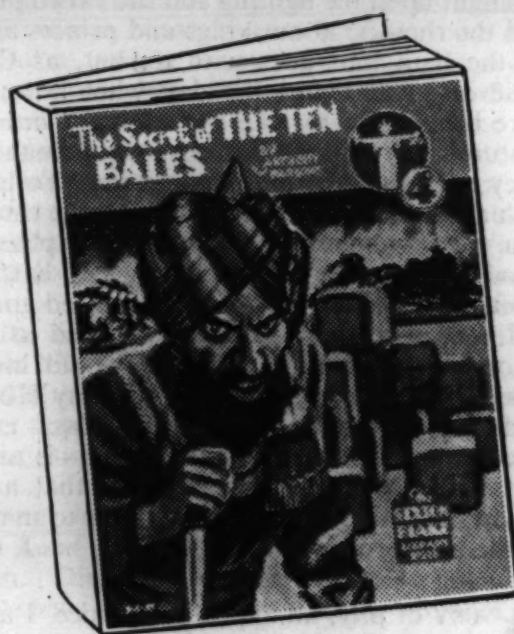
GEORGE KING is making a film called *Sexton Blake and the Master Criminal*. Tod Slaughter will probably do for the Master Criminal, but Sexton Blake is another matter.

For forty years this young detective has been practising in his rooms at Baker Street. In the course of that time he has solved a major mystery every week, and two extra long mysteries (4d. each) every month. He has never loved (except a dumb affection just before the war which only lasted a few issues), partly because heroes never do, but principally because he has never had time, for as soon as things got a bit quiet at Baker Street, George Marsden Plummer broke out of his strong lodgings at Dartmoor and had to be chased all over the roofs of Rotherhithe and all through the cellars of Soho.

All this while the police have been so completely baffled that many a time there has not been a compositor in the country who could lay his hands on an f. Sir Henry Fairfax, chief of the Yard, has sent for Blake times out of number, for jewel thieves, drug pedlars and international crooks. Some of the criminals he has caught have been the despair of seven continents.

Sherlock Holmes was tough enough to come back after Conan Doyle had flung him over a precipice on the Matterhorn, but even Holmes met his fate. Sexton Blake has been flung over more precipices than Conan Doyle ever heard of, he has been shot, strangled, thrown down the lift, drugged, gagged and bound and yet next Thursday always found him at his post. Beside Blake, Harry Houdini earned his money pretty easily. In the end, poor Houdini succumbed to a playful blow in the stomach in a New York dressing-room. He was mortal. But Blake never succumbed to anything, and he never will.

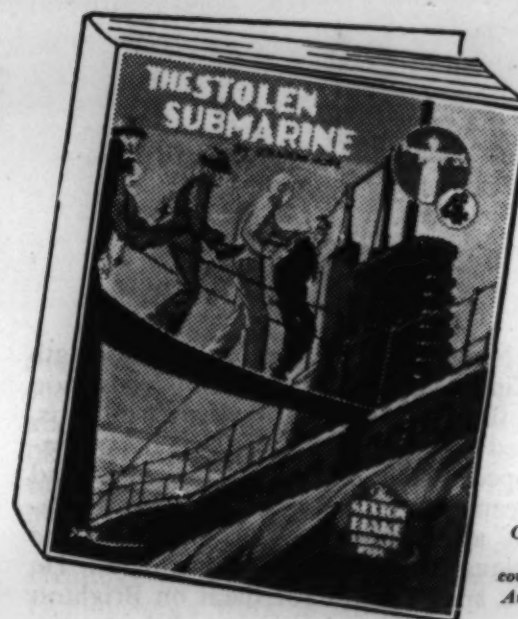
Though he was but mortal, Houdini did very well in his day as the idol of the front seats. A few years before him, Francis Ford as Count Rollo jumped and rolled about the screen, mostly with his hands tied behind his back. In due course, Douglas Fairbanks scampered from roof to roof and Tarzan swung from branch to branch. It was the boyhood of the movies, the cinema was in its early teens. All the seats were front seats. What with Douglas Fairbanks up in the rigging (for there was no keeping him on the



deck) and various pretty ladies hanging by the teeth from one week's end to another, Hollywood must have been like Bertram Mills's circus in full blast.

Douglas Fairbanks got past it, no shame to him, but unhappily Hollywood got past it too. Buck Jones, Tom Mix, Rin-tin-tin, Charlie Chan, Jack Holt and so on carried on for the sake of the children, but the rest of us were expected to put away childish things. Hollywood fell in love. It was the worst kind of love, too, the serious, introspective, twenty-year-old kind. The talkies happened about this time, more's the pity. By and by Norma Shearer was tackling all the problems of matrimony and behaviour in *The Divorcee* and *A Free Soul*, and winning medals and statuettes for it. No doubt she found the solutions, but this is something known only to those who waited till the end of the film.

THOSE salad days are passing, but the movies are still in love. It is their great pre-occupation, and still pretty serious, even when it is comic. Most of the so-called development of the movies has been in the direction of discovering new ways of being in love and new kinds of people to be in love with. The malady has penetrated the very grandest efforts. *Mr. Deeds* was not permitted to solve America's social problem without solving



Cover reproductions by courtesy of the Amalgamated Press, Ltd.

Jean Arthur's, and Ronald Colman had to give up the whole of Western Civilisation in favour of a young lady in pyjamas. In the last ten years, the only people who have been allowed to get through a full-length film without having a six-cylinder romance are Louis Pasteur and Emile Zola, both of whom in any case are disqualified by age.

Consequently, heroes are about as hard to find nowadays as vamps or villains. In the happy days before the movies began to take themselves seriously, a hero had to be able to climb a skyscraper and swim a mile under water, and was frequently called upon (wounded, if possible) to fight three men, with a sword in each hand and a dagger in his mouth, simultaneously running backwards upstairs, signalling for help, and letting down various drawbridges. The beauty of it was that everybody knew it was a lark.

Nowadays the main qualification for the leading part appears to be a disposition to fall in love with someone not your wife. By being in love with Nora, Nick Charles shook Hollywood to the foundations and caused reverberations all over the world.

People want to take all the films for gospel. Already the higher critics are saying about *A Prisoner of Zenda* what the clergyman said about "Gulliver's Travels". (He said, it is all very nice, but for my part I do not believe a word of it.) *The Plainsman* was bad enough, but at least Gary Cooper got killed at the end. *A Prisoner of Zenda* indeed. Mercy me, at this time of day.

So pack up your Sexton Blake, Mr. George King. You are fifteen years too late. We have all grown up, and we are not to be fooled with that kind of thing. We are not coming out. We won't holler down your rain-barrel, we won't climb your stable door.

We believe that Mr. Frank Capra has a message for the world; we believe that somehow or other Mr. Deeds and Ronald Colman between them will save society, we believe in love in all its permutations and combinations. Let us have Sexton Blake up to date if you like—*The Private Life of Sexton Blake*, *The Loves of Sexton Blake*, *The Soul of Sexton Blake*, yes. But *The Adventures of Sexton Blake*, no.

Russell Ferguson

FIVE FILMS

by John Grierson

KEN Nyman has held up a bar at some length telling what he did with the Coronation film at Brighton. Good showman that he is, he sensed that there was something in coronation appeal that was bringing people he had never seen before, and in fact the lost battalions of aborigines who, according to the statisticians, never go to the movies. He started a special show for them on Brighton mornings at 10.30 and as many of the twenty millions as live in Brighton came day after day, some of them fifteen or twenty times, to see it. He kept it going for months. Less brightly, Nyman concluded that he might hold them permanently, so he continued with a special programme of documentaries, sprinkled with nature films and as much snobbism as he could find in the newsreels and the interests. He folded in a fortnight. The twenty millions had seen their King and their Queen and their Archbishop and had slipped back for another reign into the boarding-house parlours and the private hotels.

One wonders if *The Prisoner of Zenda* may not be the very film to fetch them out again. It has everything that a nice but nearly departed aunt could wish for and she would be taking up her embroidery precisely where she left off. Ronald Colman is the Englishman of legend, at least of the legend of old ladies; brave, noble, dashing and suggesting alas alack-a-day that every trueborn Englishman is a king at heart and only awaits a Graustark world and double identity to prove it. No trouble here, to drag royalty by the headlines, of kings and commons mixing; but sacrifice adamant of love to duty. Ronald Colman, like a good Englishman, shows the way by riding into the eye of the setting sun and leaving Madeleine Carroll to his drunken double. Madeleine shows the way too. "Though my life be empty and my heart dead, I must do this thing" and "Honour binds a woman too". Madeleine: "In my heart there is no king and no crown". Ronald: "Does a man who marries without love look on a woman as I look on you?" Madeleine: "I am sorry . . . I have never been in love before". That is the style of the thing and the exquisite self-righteousness of Mr. Colman and the exquisite frigidity of Miss Carroll combine to make it look as sterile as it sounds.

Indeed, if Ken Nyman and his old ladies will not take to the film, one wonders who in their senses will. Here is an idea which may bring that very feat to pass. Let Ken Nyman prevail on Miss Lejeune to go out, as of old, into the highways and the byways, and compel the old ladies to come in. She writes so beautifully about Zenda that none could withstand her. She will entrap them in nostalgia for the "puffed sleeves, and braided skirts and the Norfolk shooting jackets." She will inspire them with "homesickness for the

quiet days when it was better to be good than clever", which doubtless the old ladies were anyway, and "heart's messages were wrapped round a rose and gentlemen had time even in their moments of passion to remember their subjunctives." It will be worth a guinea a box to any old lady in the land.

It is true that others who have never learned to like Graustark will react differently. They will light up at the fighting and the sword play and the rhetoric about kings and princes and all the ham that goes with it; but, as Old Believers, will regret the day when women were brought in to take the spotlight in adventure and adulterate it to mere romance. They may quote Strindberg and say "To hell with all the witches" and remember the tradition when women were kept in their places, stood waiting appropriately on the battlements and, with girdles of virtue locked good and solid to their waists, did not need to be bothered about. Prince, Bayard would have smashed his sword . . . This Anthony Hope tradition—so much do middle class and Odeon and old ladies conquer us all—is nine parts sofa play, and long sofa play at that, and only a miserable squabble of a fight to make up the measure.

J. G.

"**A**CRY of pity, an appeal for justice, I ask no more," said Zola, who is pretty much in the news just now, and whose spirit seems still to be hovering over the Burbank Studios. Warner Brothers, in fact, are still at it, and in *They won't Forget* they've turned out something on which about 14 states in the U.S.A. are almost bound to close their doors. For it is a savage, terrible, horrifying, cynical and unequivocal exposé of the backwardness and degeneration of the smalltime towns of the Southern States, which have, with their lynchings and their Scottsboro' trials, made American justice stink to heaven.

This film indeed doesn't bother to ask for a cry of pity or to make an appeal to justice. Mervyn LeRoy, who produced, has just piled up a documentation of events which take you through the good old Aristotelian Pity and Terror into a world where a cold fury supersedes a bout of vomiting. Anyhow, perhaps that's what Aristotle really meant when he talked about being Purged.

Tragedy in the accepted sense it may not be, but, as a piece of sheer film-making alone, it is one of the most terrific pieces that has ever come out of America; it makes *Fury* look like a Follies Show.

The story is hideously simple. In a small Southern town, on Memorial Day, a girl is murdered. How, or by whom, we are never told. But the scheming District Attorney wants a big public success to get into the running for the Governorship. Of the sus-

The Prisoner of Zenda

A United Artists' film, directed by John Cromwell, with Ronald Colman, Madeleine Carroll, Douglas Fairbanks, Jr., and Mary Astor.

They Won't Forget

A Warner Brothers' film, directed by Mervyn LeRoy, with Claude Rains, Edward Norris, Allyn Joslyn, Gloria Dickson and Otto Kruger.

pects, all but one are either too important, or too small fry. The one remaining is just perfect. He's a Northerner, and a college teacher. Aided by the venomous unscrupulousity of the Yellow press the Attorney fans the flames of racial hatred; and the unfortunate man, virtually condemned before the trial opens, on evidence which is only circumstantial, is sentenced to the Chair. A more liberal-minded Governor commutes the sentence to life imprisonment; so the high souled citizens step in, snatch him from the train which is taking him to prison, and lynch him. Thus the District Attorney achieves his life ambition.

Had it been presented with the more hysterical lavishness of the average American "super," the film might have failed to hit the mark. But its strength is in its omissions. We don't see the murder. We don't see the lynching (we see instead the mail train wrenching a mailbag off the pick-up bar). And by this very restraint the film becomes much more horrible than anything since *Greed*. It has, in fact, something of the crawling terror which Henry James achieved in *The Turn of the Screw*.

The attack is more than through the intellect, it reaches physical proportions. You squirm in your seat as the vicious panorama of ignorance and depravity unfolds. The narrow, nasty conversation of the townsfolk. The weak-minded degeneration of the girl's fiancé. The chinless sadism of the crime reporter. The shifty and unscrupulous District Attorney, with his ratlike eyes, his treacherous mouth mangling a cigar the way he mangles humans, as he covers his tracks with the bluff heartiness we all know only too well in the person of the average politician. . . .

The brooding atmosphere that infects the sidewalks, the offices, and the tidy little home which the accused man and his wife have with several years of labour got together, is the brooding atmosphere of real terror, the terror of realising that these are not human

REVIEWED

by Basil Wright

Stella Dallas

A United Artists' film, directed by King Vidor, with Barbara Stanwyck, John Boles and Anne Shirley.

Land Without Bread

A Spanish film, directed by Louis Bunuel.

Spanish Earth

A Spanish film, produced by Ernest Hemingway and directed by Joris Ivens.

beings, but animals with man's capabilities, who are crowding the stuffy courtroom; judge, spectators, and jury alike unanimous in the verdict before the trial begins.

No, this is not a pleasant film; there is nothing pleasant about it; but by heck it's real. It's as real as the newsreel stuff from Shanghai, and because it belongs to a world nearer our own, it's a thousand times more horrible.

The largest bouquet goes to director Mervyn LeRoy. Technically alone, it's the finest production of the year. Claude Rains, as the District Attorney, qualifies for one almost as large. Of the rest of a large cast, all of them first-class, it is almost invidious to single out Gloria Dickson, as the victim's wife, and Elisha Cook Jr., for a really macabre performance as the girl's fiancé. Don't be put off by the opening sequence, which is as falsely sentimental as it is dramatically incorrect; you'll forget it quickly enough, and, believe me, it's the only thing in the film you will forget.

STILL in the tragic mood, we turn to *Stella Dallas*, that epic of frustrated mother-love over which we all cried our eyes out in the silent twenties. Those indeed were the days, when a happy ending was almost unheard of, and the orchestra had permanent repeat-bar on "Liebestraume." The original *Stella Dallas* was, in point of fact, a first-class film, quite apart from its mush aspects. Henry King, who directed it, had a passionate and yet delicate sincerity which made much of the production movingly genuine as well as genuinely moving. And as for the cast, there was Belle Bennett as Stella, magnificently vulgar and magnificently human; there was Lois Moran—*ombre des jeunes filles en fleur*; and there was Jean Hersholt at the height of his powers. The film had a touch of greatness.

So Sam Goldwyn has tried it out again, this time with King Vidor directing. The result is as much like the original as a warmed-

up pudding. The mush remains; the inspiration has vanished. This time the sentimentality is presented with no more than a cold and calculating competence.

The truth is that sound has brought an effeminacy to films which cannot stand up to this sort of melodrama. There used to be a pure unselfconscious swashbucklery which fitted just nicely, but was destroyed when the actors no longer had to rely on mime to express themselves. Nowadays, a broken voice can reveal a broken heart; and Miss Stanwyck is good at that. But think back on Belle Bennett in the same situation. *She* had to do it with her face and hands.

Barbara Stanwyck in any case has not yet achieved the necessary dramatic control; over and over again you can see Vidor fading her out just where the personal climax should be starting. But Anne Shirley quite miraculously repeats the triumph of Lois Moran. Tender, delicate, over-sensitive, and above all, loving, she lifts each sequence she appears in out of the mediocre into something very near real drama.

THE depression deepens as we approach *Land without Bread*. An extraordinary film. Directed by the screen's quondam prophet of surrealism, Louis Bunuel, it achieves in visual simplicity, not the imaginative creativeness which is supposed to be the hallmark of documentary, but a stark presentation of actuality which certainly deserves the title of document.

This complete volte-face made by Bunuel, who hitherto had specialised in shots of dead donkeys ensconced in a grand piano, led him to a little known and remote district of Spain, inhabited by people known as the Hurdanos. In stony and infertile uplands they are born to a lifelong despair, martyrs to malnutrition, to goitre, to tuberculosis. Generations of inbreeding have produced a high percentage of cretins. Generations without hope have lost even the art of decent house-building. Children lie down in the street in a coma, cannot be moved, die. Their only hope is death.

Such are the facts that Bunuel's camera quite unemotionally presents. They are presented without sympathy and without rage. He was there with a camera; he saw these things; he photographed them. That is all.

Unfortunately someone (presumably not Bunuel) has added to the film a wearisome American commentary plus the better part of a Brahms symphony. As a result, picture and sound never coalesce, and it is only the starkness of the presented facts which counts.

SINCERE, truthful, moving, *The Spanish Earth*. So you can guess that our old friend the censor had to have a go at it with his

emasculating scissors; cutting out "horror" shots and removing tactless references to German and Italian intervention. But with a film like this the impotence he would inflict returns upon himself. Snip he never so furiously, he cannot destroy its strength.

It was made by Joris Ivens and Ernest Hemingway; and those who complain that Hemingway's work is falling off had better prepare to eat their hats, for he has written the best commentary in the history of the sound film. As the pathetic little groups of six men go out across the quiet fields to the attack (a scene photographed with all the restraint which, not merely through the physical compulsion of flying bullets but also through Ivens's sense of film-making, gives this film a quality of greatness) as they go out across the fields they used to till, Hemingway's voice—for he speaks the commentary himself—cuts through the sounds of crackling battle, "This is the moment which all the rest of the war prepares for, when six men go forward into death, to walk across a stretch of land, and by their presence on it prove this land is ours."

It is not merely fact that this film presents, but emotions and moods which build up for the first time a true picture of what war is really like. But it presents more than this—it presents the face of Spain and the faces of its people, proud and remote until bombs drop or shells shatter, then in panic and tears; women who trip and fall in their run for the safety of the Metro station, women who gasp and weep in that horrible vacuum which follows the destruction of the home they have lived in so happily until two minutes ago; ordinary men who have become soldiers almost imperceptibly, who will fire a field-gun every so often at the ruins of their great University which, thanks to the treachery of fellow countrymen and the mercenary troops of Italy and Germany, they must bring even further to destruction; and, worst of all, the faces of children who cannot understand, but are afraid.

Villages, cities, churches, fields—they are all here—a picture of Spain itself. There is no sensational cutting and no coruscating camera-work; but there is the observation of men who can imaginatively observe, can feel and express the implications of what they see. "Man cannot act before the camera in the presence of death," says Hemingway, as a frieze of magnificent faces of Government troops swing past the camera; but here is something more than acting.

We can only hope that the well-meaning Left and Liberal press has not, by screaming to the roof-tops that the censor has mutilated the film, put people off going to see *The Spanish Earth*. Ignoble cuts count for nothing when you are watching a great film. B.W.

IN the picture you can see the biding restraint and driving power of arms and shoulders, the bodies weaving, surging, braced. You can see in perfect focus the deadly precision of Joe Louis, weighing 198 pounds and moving like 140, also his one-two-three routine—a left to the body followed through, by some powerful flex of shoulder, into a left hook to the head, and the right coming in through the opening, bam. You can see in slow motion every step and blow following the first blow to stagger this fighting turret, the long-range salvo against the bones forward of his left ear which sent the Brown Bomber scuttling off backwards in queer little half-circles on his heels; and Schmeling moving up on him in a fury of attack and Louis melting under those blows like butter, seeking cover where there was none, blown wide open with a left and seeming in the slow motion to hang there for seconds as the right came in like a train of cars, bouncing him on the canvas.

In the camera record you can see the several low blows struck by Louis subsequently, and along with the worst of them the somehow touching picture of his remorse and mute reassurance to Max (one doesn't talk through a clenched mouthpiece) by throwing arms over his shoulders with futile pats of the glove. And you can see the kill as clear as crystal—Louis coming out wavering but still to be reckoned with as usual, his being driven back around the ring, knocked silly with the final direct hit, toddling like a baby under the pelting gloves, and then the last completely safe powerhouse sending him halfway around and down like a brick chimney.

These pictures of the fight must be among the best ever made; they are a night with the gladiators, a round trip to Mars, they are practically everything. And yet there is missing from their flat black-and-white motion across the screen something vital—whatever it took to make the fight a fight and the air charged with uncertainty, everybody there with his nerves strung like a harp. Without the crowds and smoke and sharp cries growing through the preliminaries, the atmosphere becoming heavy as the fighters climb through the ropes in their bathrobes, the colour and rough tangibility and spirit of the place, the recorded action becomes more like a waxworks, however true to life—a little ghoulish, like the acting out of a murder. . . .

Well, it wasn't that way with us in the Stadium, where the idea of Joe Louis as the invincible torpedo died hard. We had been told. This Negro heavyweight is a sensation— young, purposeful on the up-grade, backing weight with speed, and speed with dynamite in both shoulders (speed and weight without that special slugger's leverage in the muscles of the shoulder and back are no good), and rounding it all off with an unflustered command of all the blows and their combinations and the angles from which they may be swung. And what is more, Louis is a killer, always has been a killer, sullen and cruelly efficient and heavy of eye. He doesn't grin, slap backs; doesn't have to.

Whereas Max Schmeling is thirty now, pretty old for a fighter. He has been The



All the World Knows

Otis Ferguson's descriptive review of a Big Fight F
turning of coats to be on the winning side, all this mi
ambition and body being broken under spotlight—this

Champ, but is champ no longer, and was never very glorious. What has he got? A right, a clumsy technique, and lead in his pants. So the sports-writers have a lot of fun with him. Well, well, one more day before they lay Maxie in his pine box. Der Big Max will come in like a lion and go out like a light they say, and laugh. Spare a laugh for poor old Max, with one doubtful right arm and one foot in the grave.

And so it took quite a long time for the idea

to sink in that the newspaper boys must have been talking about somebody else. And still the tension held, for even after the seventh round the fight was no certainty, there were no wise guys at the time who jumped up and announced that the fight was in the bag. That man was still worth watching, and when he flicked a shoulder you could see Schmeling's head go back, hard. Louis was instinctively game and a living danger so long as the feet held up under him, and even in the last round



Associated Press picture

loves a Winnah

Fight Film; a brilliant piece of writing; "All this mirth and high spirits in the face of a man's this is callous, knavish . . . somehow obscene."

managed to throw in a long right that would have mowed the whole working-press section down like a row of wooden soldiers. But not Max, he couldn't get Max down, and so as the people gradually caught on that Louis might be the Brown Bomber but old Max was out-fighting and outlasting and gradually knocking the heart out of him, they began to shift, until Joe Louis as the people's favourite was lost sight of, during the last two or three rounds, by all except the Negroes in the

audience, who were silent and seemed dazed.

THE people weren't very decent about this fight. You wonder what they go for. You go yourself and are nervous as a chicken, more scared of Joe Louis than anybody who faced him in the ring. You watch the fight and don't know if it's Friday evening or San Francisco. And if you have a taste for imagination you imagine how the world of these two has

shrunk to a right glove and a left glove and a tough weaving head above them, the yelling night air of the place falling away to a stillness of inhuman exertion and inner counsel. (Watch his right, watch his right, back a little and shift, watch, watch . . . just over the cheekbone, just below the ribs), to an almost visual chart of moves to make or block, and then the false move and the rain of blows, the giddy lights and whirling universe and gloves as big as box cars (get clear, get clear now, stay up, clinch for cover and stay up). And then the gradual shift to blackness, a nightmare of circling and blocking and striking out automatically, the body no longer under control as such, the remote movements of arms and legs coming as a dim surprise but as of no moment, the iron gloves in front and a painful brief rest in the seconds' corner with acid restoratives and rubs and slaps and out again. And then a heavy jar (get back, get away out, stay off) and then the big guns and a fall through space, thousands of faces through the ropes, a convulsion (*three, four, five*—the count, get up, knees up—*seven, eight*—knees up, try, move, get up) and the knees giving like jelly and the floor coming up and the body gone into it, nothing but distant noises, lights and rest with a bad throbbing.

But do people feel it this way, is there some such feeling for the tragedy of a man's being pounded groggy and the senses practically blown out of his body, some kind of awe or pity or something? It must be there is some, but it is certainly not vocal. Max Schmeling hasn't a chance, so they come in yelling for Joe Louis (here and there a rebel voice going counter to the crowd); then in the theatre they know Louis was beaten raw, and so come in yelling for Max (slug him, Maxie, oh, it's murder, oh, slug him). And for that pitiful figure of a man wobbling around out of his senses with the head being blasted off his shoulders, for that proud two hundred pounds of fighting power and skill, tottering and fumbling and shooting its weak lefts at the moon, there is no more compassion evident than shows itself in the laughter to see him bounce grotesquely on the floorboards, the hoots for his rubber knees, the final anxious clapping and rooting for the kill.

Of course the boys are fighters in a prize ring, it's their job, they are paid for it; no use getting soft on the subject. But all this turning of coats to be on the winning side, all this mirth and high spirits in the face of a man's ambition and body being broken under spot-lights—this is callous, knavish, the presence of it in this theatre disheartening, somehow obscene. It would seem that the main part of our boasted interest in boxing as an art and sport is simply a desire to see blood let and tissue bruised. And as to another one of our pet national qualities, may we not put it that we are always cheering for the underdog just so long as we can find an underdog who is a ten-to-one shot to come home ahead and on top—the winnah.

This is an extract from the film reviews by Otis Ferguson, collected in the book "Greta Garbo and the Night Watchmen," published by Jonathan Cape at 7s. 6d.

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GUIDE to DECEMBER RELEASES



Loretta Young in "Love is News"

MARRIED BEFORE BREAKFAST

(Edwin Marin—M.G.M.) Robert Young, Florence Rice.

Another comedy in the happy-go-lucky cycle, but not quite up to standard. Young invents a shaving cream that does away with razors, and a razor blade factory pays him a large sum to keep the cream off the market. With this money he decides to take a trip around the world, but becomes involved with, and decides to help, a young couple who want to get married. There is a night of escapades including stolen cars, crashes and cops, before everything is satisfactorily straightened out.

TOP OF THE TOWN

(Ralph Murphy—Universal.) Doris Nolan, George Murphy, Gregory Ratoff, Mischa Auer.

Elaborate and costly musical. This ballet versus jazz film is studded with radio and vaudeville people and, on the whole, recalls those old Schubert revues—a big production and little else. It is a series of comedy sketches, songs, ballet, with a wind-up of shim-sham, truckin', etc., with nothing sufficiently outstanding to lift the picture out of the 'just average' class.

WEE WILLIE WINKIE

(John Ford—20th Century-Fox.) Shirley Temple, Victor McLaglen, June Lang.

Taken from a Kipling adventure tale concerning a young American widow and her daughter who travels to India to the child's grandfather, a colonel of a Highland Regiment stationed on the frontier, this melodrama launches Shirley Temple into a new phase of her career. Native insurrection, massacre, and the little girl going on a peace-pleading mission which lands her into the hands of the enemy, provide the melodramatic suspense.

CAPTAINS COURAGEOUS

(Victor Fleming—M.G.M.) Freddie Bartholomew, Spencer Tracy, Lionel Barrymore, Melvyn Douglas.

This film, the outstanding release of the month, is reviewed by John Grierson elsewhere in this issue.

LOVE IS NEWS

(Tay Garnett—20th Century-Fox.) Tyrone Power, Loretta Young, Don Ameche.

Hilarious and fast-moving comedy built around a front-page heiress's revenge on a reporter. Power as a reporter tricks heiress Young into an exclusive interview. She hits back by plastering his name across the nation's headlines as her future husband. Power is besieged by reporters seeking a statement, and hounded by his editor, Don Ameche. Fresh comedy ideas, slickly handled and well acted, make this film first class entertainment.



HILLS OF OLD WYOMING

(Nate Watt—Paramount.) William Boyd, George Hayes, Gail Sheridan.

The Hopalong Cassidy series are well-produced and above the run of the average western. William Boyd stars as Cassidy; James Ellison, who graduated to *The Plainsman*, is replaced capably by Russell Haydon. This, the sixth in the series, is about trouble between Indians and cattlemen started by a deputy on the reservation, in which Cassidy takes a hand. Good, crisp action and some good vocal efforts.



VICTORIA THE GREAT

(Herbert Wilcox—R.K.O.-Radio.) Anna Neagle, Anton Walbrook, H. B. Warner, Arthur Young.

World Film News has already said its piece on the kind of history put around by films such as this. The film shows the accession of the young Victoria, the marriage with Albert, her widowhood and the close of her reign in the Jubilee. Closing sequences in colour. Echoes of great events punctuate the story at chosen intervals. Despite its faults, as a piece of filming this is in many ways impressive. And Anton Walbrook does a good job of acting.



Tyrone Power in "Love is News"

SLIM

(Ray Enright—Warner Bros.) Pat O'Brien, Henry Fonda, Margaret Lindsay, Stuart Erwin.

Story deals with hazards and importance of a power linesman's work, recording its influence on the lives of the three main characters, reaching its climax with O'Brien and Fonda climbing towers to repair live wires during the blizzard. Plenty of action, with the outstanding teamwork of O'Brien and Fonda overshadowing the feminine interest.

TOPPER

(Norman McLeod—M.G.M.) Constance Bennett, Cary Grant, Roland Young.

Fantastic comedy taken from Thorne Smith's novel about a madcap couple who are killed in a car crash following a tour of the night clubs. At loss to remember any good deed which will serve as a passport into the spirit world, these two earth-bound creatures decide to show Topper, a staid banker dominated by a fussy wife, how to enjoy life. Thanks to good acting, downright humour and an unusual plot, film provides above average entertainment.

Other Releases include :

WE HAVE OUR MOMENTS

A Universal crook comedy-drama, with Sally Eilers.

23½ HOURS LEAVE

A Grand National release with James Ellison.

THE CASE OF THE STUTTERING BISHOP

A First National picture with Donald Woods. For Perry Mason murder mystery fans.

SAID O'REILLY TO McNAB

A Gainsborough film with Will Fyfe. For determined supporters of the British Film Industry.

REVIEW OF REVIEWS Edited by H. E. Blyth

The Life of Emile Zola

REVIEW OF THE MONTH

(William Dieterle—First National.)

Paul Muni, Joseph Schildkraut, Gale Sondergaard.

Perhaps we are only little writers, puffing out only cheeks of fury, alongside the blasting typhoons hurled by such as Zola. But no writer who retains so much as a flicker of responsibility toward his calling will be able to see the film of the life of Emile Zola without entering into it and identifying himself with its hero, without feeling his soul augmented and his spine stiffened as he tries to grow into the image of the man whose works and actions most powerfully expressed the function of the writer in human society. There is only one theme to the story of Zola, and that is the search for truth, the persistent exposure of truth. And whether a writer is involved in the elaboration of a graceful style, whether he spends his life energy, as did Joyce, trying to break open a new form, whether he speaks only of beauty, or even of decay, he will tell you, in the last analysis, that he is seeking the truest way to present truth.

To the layman, *The Life of Emile Zola* may be nothing more than a film; a majestic, forceful retelling of the story of the most monstrous conspiracy in modern times—the Dreyfus case; the ever-recurring story of a judicial frame-up, of an innocent man sacrificed to prevent the exposure of criminally perverted forces of government, of corruption, prejudice, and bribery. The Evangelists had to write it, when they knew what happened to Jesus Christ. Zola had to write it when he learned what happened to Dreyfus. Maxwell Anderson had to write it, of Sacco and Vanzetti.

In Chicago there is such a case growing. Here, where I live, as you may know, a line of police, either blundering, or under vicious direction, fired into a steel strikers' demonstration, on Memorial Day, killing ten people. Since then, the traditional manœuvres of government bodies faced with the necessity of covering the blunders of underlings have taken place. First, the truth must be suppressed; essential documents, records, must be kept from the public; secondly, a scapegoat must be found to bear the blame. I have watched newspapers carefully building up prejudice, I have followed the statements and tactics of public officials as they elaborate their lie



"A majestic, re-telling of the Dreyfus Case . . ."



"It makes me proud, strong again . . ."

through stool-pigeons and provocateurs. As I sat through the film of Zola, I could only see the parallel of the technique, how alive it is, how pertinent it is to this day; is it always true that persons in authority, in high office, are pig-headedly stupid when confronted with the faults of their régime? Will they to this day conspire to set blame on innocent people, rather than manfully admit the wrongs in their own system? The truth—how are you going to get it to the people? How are you going to get any truth to the people? Whom will they believe?

That's when a writer gets the uttermost feeling of helplessness, of hopelessness, and yet within this despair is the sense that he must find some way to present the truth so that they will believe it, and the knowledge that miraculously, writers have succeeded in doing this before, succeeded in tearing down generals and kings.

That is in Zola: it makes one proud, it makes one feel strong again. We who live after Zola know how to watch for prejudice, yes, and the inspired method of his accusation is so overwhelming that we want to paraphrase *J'Accuse* in every situation where prejudice must be exposed, where deliberate, manipulated injustice must be fought.

—Meyer Levin, *Esquire*

The spirit which impelled Zola to espouse the cause of truth is an everlasting spirit which is needed to-day as greatly as when it operated in the life of the French writer. That is the message of the film in which Mr. Paul Muni plays the part of this nineteenth-century reformer.

The entire Dreyfus affair, which forms the climax of the film story, is presented with no indication whatsoever of the anti-Semitic motives which were included in the reasons for the popular outcry engineered against Dreyfus. In fact, there is no indication whatsoever in the film that Dreyfus was a Jew—if we exclude the brief shot of the official record of him on the French General Staff. In the earlier scenes of Zola's life, where he shares his poverty and his prophetic zeal with Cézanne (played by Vladimir Sokoloff), there is the popular appeal of the sentimental reformer somewhat in the manner of a permanently urbanised Mr. Deeds. But the best and most convincing part of the film is where Zola has become a famous and successful author, is decorated with the Légion d'Honneur, and courted by the Académie Française. As a sermon for our time, this film is both salutary and timely. One feels that

its lessons for the persecutors of the Jewish people could have been usefully included.

—*The Jewish Chronicle*

Big City

(Frank Borzage—Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer.)

Spencer Tracy, Luise Rainer.

This new starring team of Luise Rainer and Spencer Tracy might have been created for my emotional undoing. She has only to let a flicker of suffering twitch that lovely face, shaped like a tear gathering to fall, and I wince in sympathy.

Tracy has no tricks. But he is, I firmly believe, the greatest actor on the screen to-day. Watch him when the focus is not on him. He has the great artist's power to project his thoughts and feelings, to create and crystallise a world of illusion, without appearing to do anything at all. If you remember such excellent emotional films as *Bad Girl* and *Man's Castle* (another of Tracy's) you will recognise, in the presence of Frank Borzage as director, the explanation of this film's exquisite, movingly human moments. Borzage's ability to realise and convey the ordinary feelings of ordinary people makes the synthetic, glamorised puppet-romances of the screen seem vapid and boring.

—Stephen Watts, *The Sunday Express*

Big City is an interesting picture, with a weakness which emerges rather surprisingly as a good point. Having spent an hour in New York's Bowery, with Spencer Tracy as a taxi-driver and Luise Rainer as his loving wife—a pleasantly romantic story with an occasional flash of sincerity—we suddenly bump into a crazy gang fight at the docks as the Berengaria pulls out for Europe. Yet, looking back on it, the scrap was the best thing in the picture. This is not, I think, a portrait likely to add to Tracy's high reputation. He plays his cabbie well, as he plays everything well. But the part has little depth to it. Miss Rainer is a baffling actress. She has abnormal camera charm, and can at times be delightful. But she has a tendency to posture, to treat the same things in the same manner all the time, so that her work suggests an artificiality which probably does not really belong there. This is odd, for at her best she can sustain a character unusually well—as in the case of *The Good Earth*.

—Connery Chappell, *The Sunday Dispatch*



"The greatest actor on the Screen to-day . . ."

Ali Baba Goes to Town

(David Butler—Twentieth Century-Fox.)

Eddie Cantor, Roland Young, June Lang, Virginia Field.

Eddie Cantor's *Ali Baba Goes to Town* takes its trimmings from "The Arabian Nights," but it stays close to home all the time. A bright musical to cheer up the electorate at this season of the year, it shows us a Cantor vagrant, wily and airy, who floats off to Bagdad in a dream and persuades the Sultan to give up his throne, or his cushion or pouf, or whatever it is in Bagdad, and run for President. We see a nice election parade with slogans of a noble dignity, like "Every Man a Sultan, Every Home a Harem." Things go wrong with the vagrant at last, and he is in danger of being "berled in erl" until he discovers the word that lifts a magic carpet to the heavens, which word is none other than our old pet, "inflatons". Perhaps you can gather from these little items somewhat the general idea. The film is helped by a pervading liveliness, some bright tunes, and Cantor's own particular version of a vagrant, a fancy vagrant who is a movie fan and autograph-seeker. I was also touched by the licence plates on the camels in various desert scenes. Altogether, looking upon the film rather as entertainment than as a political treatise, I am tempted to think it one of the lightest and most absurd of the Cantor series. After all, it's Eddie Cantor who is the hero, and not Walter Lippmann.

—John Mosher, *The New Yorker*

Double Wedding

(Richard Thorpe—M.G.M.)

William Powell, Myrna Loy.

In the Marx Brothers films there is a Miss Margaret Dumont, who stands always for the sanities in a collapsing world. However ghastly the tricks of the brothers, Miss Dumont, as the patron of opera or the grande dame of the Social Registers, remains indomitable and well-mannered amid the chaos.

Miss Myrna Loy represents something of the sort in *Double Wedding*. Prim, severe, a manager of other people's lives, she is the rock of respectability against which beat the waves of Mr. Powell's lunacy. He lives in a trailer on a vacant lot, subject to no schedules. Miss Loy, on the other hand, has neatly-typed menus to tell her what she is to eat at her lonely meals, and her gardener has to water the plants in a downpour of rain because the weather forecasts said it would not rain.

I thought I caught more than one echo of the Marx brothers. Not only did Mr. Powell contrive to suggest a more dapper version of Groucho, but some of the situations, though still funny, were reminiscent. In one of the Marx films the brothers, besieged in a fortress, were rescued by the U.S. Army, Navy, Air Force, assorted fire brigades, police, and hundreds of Olympic runners. In *A Night at the Opera* 20 or 30 people piled themselves into a small steamer cabin.

Both these ideas are exploited in *Double Wedding*. In an uproarious climax thousands of passers-by are attracted to the trailer by rumours of the marriage; what seems like several hundred of them manage to force their way inside as uninvited guests.

This is first-class entertainment. After the two

W.F.N. Selection.

<i>They Won't Forget</i>	*	*	*
<i>The Life of Emile Zola</i>	*	*	*
<i>Spanish Earth</i>	*		
<i>The Prisoner of Zenda</i>	*		
<i>Big City</i>	*		
<i>Angel</i>	*		

Films also covered in this issue.

<i>Land Without Bread</i>
<i>Ali Baba Goes to Town</i> (Stars reserved)
<i>Double Wedding</i>
<i>Ebb Tide</i>
<i>Stella Dallas</i>
<i>100 Men and a Girl</i> (Stars reserved)
<i>Car-Tune Portrait</i>
<i>Exclusive</i>
<i>Un Carnet de Bal</i>
<i>Pearls of the Crown</i>
<i>Tales from the Vienna Woods</i>
<i>The Last Night</i>

Thin Man films it was natural to fear an anticlimax. *Double Wedding* avoids it triumphantly—by dipping further into lunacy. The padding has simply been ripped from the padded cell—and we are still amused.

—R. MacC., *The Daily Telegraph*

Double Wedding doesn't make sense for a single instant, and isn't meant to. It is really custard pie slapstick in a luxury setting, rather as if the guests at Claridge's began to hurl cocktail sausages at one another.

Mr. Powell and Miss Loy, who have been happily married on the screen for years, and were beginning to settle down to parental responsibilities in the last picture we saw them in, are back again in the initial stages of Hollywood love—word-slashing and face-slapping. Miss Loy, a brisk business woman, smacks Mr. Powell on the head with anything handy, and Mr. Powell, in pyjamas, fur coat, and beret, slings Miss Loy through the door in a manner unusual in gentlemen.

It's all rather confusing to their admirers, and there's a faint, a very faint suggestion of grown-ups dressing up and playing a rowdy game to amuse the children. If you're set on being entertained at any cost, though, you may find it good, rough fun.

—C. A. Lejeune, *The Sunday Observer*

Ebb Tide

(James Hogan—Paramount.)

Oscar Homolka, Ray Milland, Frances Farmer, Lloyd Nolan, Barry Fitzgerald.

As soon as this film was over, I rushed off to buy the book and so renew its acquaintance. Apart from the needless forcing of an Irish actor to play a Cockney (he might just as well have been made Irish), and apart especially from the opening and closing blasts of hideous music, this is an absolutely first-class transcription to the screen of a rich and enchanting novel. An astonishing amount of the original dialogue is retained, and the thing is carried through at an exciting pace. The squall is magnificent, as good as any I have ever seen in the cinema. Attwater's exquisitely rational form of insanity is brought out brilliantly in the film by an actor called Lloyd Nolan. Homolka, as the Dutchman, is better than I have seen him before, which is saying a very great deal. Frances Farmer is an extraordinarily pretty new actress, though, of course, I have sought in vain in the novel for the young lady with the gun. At least, we are wonderfully spared any love-making, even on the island. Yet nobody seems to have taken the slightest notice of *Ebb Tide*, and nobody presumably will. I dare say a single silly kiss would have made all the difference.

—James Agate, *The Tatler*

Ebb Tide, unevenly told in exuberant Technicolor, is the story of three beachcombers—a derelict skipper, a drunken Cockney, and an English "university man"—who are commissioned to sail an abandoned ship with a cargo of champagne from Papeete to Sydney.

The skipper is shot down in cold blood, the Cockney dies of vitriol burns, but the university man sails away with the boarding-school miss into a Technicolor sunrise, thus justifying the benefits of the higher education. Awarding the honours for this film (pardon me, this "thundering saga of the South Seas") I give first prize to the typhoon, second prize to Oscar Homolka for his portrait of the skipper, and divide the booby prize evenly between Lloyd Nolan (the maniac) and Barry Fitzgerald (the Cockney) for the most glowingly bad performances I have seen in years.

—C. A. Lejeune, *The Sunday Observer*



"A single kiss would have made all the difference . . ."



"Glamour in double dress . . ."

Angel

(Ernst Lubitsch—Paramount.)

Marlene Dietrich, Herbert Marshall, Melvyn Douglas, Edward Everett Horton, Herbert Mundin, Ernest Cossart.

Angel is a rich Hollywood dish that copies foreign recipes. It is Ernst Lubitsch, with Continental delight, tackling a plot to his liking in a far more serious manner than is his custom, but underneath the approach he makes to a problem piece there is to be found the faint perfume of Lubitsch drawing-room (and bedroom) subtlety which has served him so well for many years.

Angel is a drama more than it is a comedy, laugh lines being restricted almost to servants, who include Edward Everett Horton, Ernest Cossart and Herbert Mundin. They are intensely interesting service characters from whom much more footage could well have been accepted. Of the trio, Cossart gets the biggest chance to make good. He is the particularly engaging butler in the swank household of a British diplomat.

Miss Dietrich is glamour in double dress. This time she is wearing eyelashes that you could hang your hat on and every now and then the star flicks 'em as though a dust storm was getting in the way. Marshall is excellent as the duped husband. The usual smooth performance is obtained from Douglas, but, as the luckless, persistent lover who wants to take Miss Dietrich from her hubby at any cost, he is not a particularly sympathetic character.

—Variety

It's a diverting film, very neatly finished off with the light Lubitsch touch. The dear old triangle situation, lavishly overdressed, with lots of sequins and heavy Jacobean furniture, takes on a freshness again with all this sumptuous gloss and holds us charmed. We see Marlene as the neglected wife of a consequential British diplomat, a sort of Anthony Eden role played serenely and agreeably by Herbert Marshall. Getting a bit dismal, this wife flits to Paris and straight to a highly questionable, if altogether circumspect, establishment run by a "Grand Duchess" for the benefit of lone males of wealth. She ventures into romance, and Melvyn Douglas is smooth and urbane as the gallant who almost breaks up the lady's marriage. Laura Hope Crews does a superb bit as this Grand Duchess, and I think, by way of carping, that more of her humour would have served to brighten the film's somewhat grave atmosphere. However, that would have put the film on the scandalous side, which heaven forbid.

—John Mosher, *The New Yorker*

Stella Dallas

(King Vidor—United Artists.)

Barbara Stanwyck, John Boles, Anne Shirley.

Criticism must always be a personal opinion, but thinking it over I assert—though with fear of contradiction—that Barbara Stanwyck, by her performance in *Stella Dallas*, has turned in the year's best acting job on the screen. To those who still sniff at film acting as compared with the theatre, I go farther and declare that the West End stage not only fails to show anything as good to-day; but has not given us such superb work from any actress for at least three years. In *Stella Dallas* Barbara Stanwyck plays a small-town young woman doomed by her inherently vulgar nature to be a social liability to her husband. Sympathy arises because we know she will some time realise that she is the proverbial sow's ear which can never be made into a silk purse; and because her pathetic, cleverly over-dressed pushfulness simply leads to deterioration, divorce, and her daughter's humiliation. Her artistry never strikes a false note, and we share the anguish of a tortured soul's renunciation and defeat.

—P. L. Mannoek, *The Daily Herald*

Twelve years ago Samuel Goldwyn had two continents weeping over the sad case of Stella Dallas, golden-hearted vulgarian, who sacrificed body and soul to bring up her daughter as a lady.

I should say off-hand that the finer points of the old direction are missing. King Vidor has handled his emotional tale by rule-of-three; his types, vulgar and refined, are plainly labelled, his approach to a scene is regular, his crises mere blocks of feeling, familiar in outline. Barbara Stanwyck as Stella, takes the style from her director, and John Boles, as the refined Dallas, gives a performance without surprises. Only young Anne Shirley, who plays the daughter, is apt to play merry hell with the Goldwyn-Vidor conception. Her part is about as well done as anyone could do it; fresh, wistful, frank, and uncomfortably spontaneous.

—C. A. Lejeune, *The Sunday Observer*

100 Men and a Girl

(Henry Koster—Universal.)

Leopold Stokowski, Deanna Durbin, Adolphe Menjou, Mischa Auer.

Aside from its value as entertainment, which is considerable, Universal's *100 Men and a Girl* reveals the cinema at its sunny-sided best. Hollywood sheds a commiserative tear over the plight of unemployed artists and suggests a solution; get together as a symphony orchestra, find a sponsor and wangle Leopold Stokowski into serving as guest conductor. Selah! Selah, indeed, in *100 Men and a Girl*, but only because the unemployed music-makers—Adolphe Menjou, Mischa Auer among them—had the good fortune to have Deanna Durbin as their organiser, agent, manager and promoter. Being a joyous sprite, with an astonishingly mature soprano, an exuberant nature and an abiding faith in mankind, even in womankind, Miss Durbin makes the impossible seem only moderately improbable. Over the highs and lows of symphony and comedy she weaves her refreshing course; not a great singer and certainly not a great actress, but a wholesome and spring-like personality, one of the nicest the screen has given us in a long time.

—Frank S. Nugent, *The New York Times*

Car-Tune Portrait

(Max Fleischer—Paramount.)

Most people number among their acquaintances the human approximation to a Donald Duck or a Pluto, and the lion conductor in Mr. Max Fleischer's *Car-Tune Portrait* is a familiar type. He is earnest, he is sincere, he is a lion with a Purpose. He addresses the audience in a manner which is a mixture of commercial showmanship and moral "uplift".

The orchestra is at one with his conductor's baton, and then something goes wrong, a false note creeps in, a joke is made and the concert collapses into an uproarious free-fight. There is something in these animal creations which is charmingly reminiscent of the moods of childhood. At one moment intensely and self-righteously solemn; the next throwing all restraint to the winds and thinking it the best joke in the world to break a violin over a neighbour's head. Mr. Fleischer's animals are not as highly individualised as are those of Mr. Walt Disney, though it will take a long time to forget those hippopotami blowing away through their instruments as though their lives depended on it.

—The Times

Critical Summary.

The Max Fleischer cartoons have never received their just recognition, for, like all other cartoon pictures, they have been hopelessly over-shadowed by the work of Walt Disney. Certainly Disney has always been a long way ahead of his rivals, in his ability to create strongly individual characters, in his composition and colouring, and above all in his fantasy, revealed just recently at its exquisite best in "The Old Mill". But the Fleischer cartoons have also been frequently outstanding—one recalls with pleasure "The Elephant Never Forgets", "Cinderella", "Time For Love" and "Dancing On the Moon", with their engaging theme songs and most noticeable stereoscopic effects—and besides this series of Colour Classics there is also, of course, the inimitable Popeye, to prove that Disney is not the only person who can create forceful characters. Popeye has recently appeared in colour, following Mickey Mouse's lead in "The Band Concert", and his spinach is almost as well known as Donald Duck's "Wanna Fight?". Fleischer, no doubt, will never make anything like "Water Babies", "Lullaby Land" or "The Old Mill", but he has yet the art of working in a happy world of unreality and make-believe, and his little pictures should be given the praise they merit.



"Makes the impossible seem only moderately improbable . . ."

Exclusive

(Alexander Hall—Paramount.)

Fred MacMurray, Charlie Ruggles, Frances Farmer.

It is a curious thing that newspaper pictures, even the first-rate ones, such as *The Front Page* and *Gentlemen of the Press* and *Sensation* have not been great hits with the public. Perhaps cinema-goers think that reporters should be read and not screened. In this picture Fred MacMurray and Charlie Ruggles are held up as examples of honest, hard-working newspapermen. They work for a proprietor who is on the side of law and order, and they despise the yellow, sensation-seeking efforts of their rival (and more successful) newspaper run by a gangster (Lloyd Nolan). Ruggles comes out best in the picture with his portrait of a middle-aged reporter. His last address (as he dies from gangster bullets, having written his final story) about how to become a good newspaperman is hard to bear.

—Ian Coster, *The Evening Standard*

Exclusive strikes me as a sorry victim to the common complaint of being over strenuous. The excitement in it is so frenzied as to deaden its effect. Its detail is so overwhelming as to appear stupid and cumbersome. The improbabilities of the tale transcend all recent imaginings. If you can find edification in racketeering by journalism, the habits of criminals and reporters who behave as no criminals or reporters could ever have behaved, you will rejoice in this picture. Not even the brilliant acting of Charlie Ruggles and the virility of Fred MacMurray can compensate for the rubbishy violence of this excursion into crime. I am the more concerned with the attack made in this film upon newspapers in America because its author professes that the incidents related in it were inspired by his own journalistic experiences. If this is correct I cannot resist the suspicion that Mr. Alexander Hall has lent an exaggeration and a fury to them which make them unacceptable.

—Sydney W. Carroll, *The Sunday Times*

Critical Summary.

Of all American institutions which Hollywood, wittingly or unwittingly, has held up for the public scorn, none has been so consistently degraded in the filmgoer's eyes as the American press. No creation of Hollywood is quite so soulless as the newshound in full cry. This picture is, therefore, remarkable since it introduces us to an American journal with some code of ethics, some sense of decency. It even goes so far as to propound the theory that somewhere there is a heaven for newspapermen, surely a wholly untenable supposition in the light of "The Front Page" and "Five Star Final".

Un Carnet De Bal

(Julien Duvivier—French.)

Harry Baur, Raimu, Louis Jouvet, Fernandel, Blanchar, Françoise Rosay.

This is not only one of the major films the French have ever made, but also one of the grandest films Hollywood never made. Mechanically, the story is built on the same structure as *The Bridge of San Luis Rey*; i.e., it uses an object, once associated with a group of people, as a focus for pursuing the tangents of their various lives. This film's focus is the girlish, first-dance programme of a rich, ripe widow who traces the scattered lives of eight young waltz partners who

had once sworn to love her forever. Owing to the brilliant all-star cast, these partners turn out to be some of the greatest male actors of France—Louis Jouvet, in the superb rôle of a cynical night-club owner and thieves' mouthpiece; Harry Baur, as a musical monk; Raimu, as a Midi mayor about to marry his cook; Fernandel, as a barber with a passion for card tricks; and Blanchar, as a one-eyed abortionist on the waterfront of Marseilles. Two of the waltzers have already died, one leaving a crazed widow, played by Françoise Rosay in the truest, least truculent enactment of insanity the French screen has ever recorded. The sum of the plot sounds sinister, literary, and melodramatic. Because of the energetic, dry directing of Duvivier this movie bulges merely with excitement, surprise, and adult, humane humour.

—Paris Correspondent, *The New Yorker*

The Pearls of the Crown

(Sacha Guitry and Christian Jaque—French.)

Sacha Guitry, Jacqueline Delubac, Lyn Harding.

M. Sacha Guitry is bold and experimental in his treatment of films, but this is an experiment to be discarded. He sets out not to tell one, two, or even three stories—although his plot, if it can so be called, depends on the three missing pearls of the crown—but a multitude of them. He tells them in three different languages, and ransacks the ages and spoils the climbs in the pursuit. Kings, Queens, Cardinals, and Ministers come and go, are switched on the screen only to disappear before one's eyes with the smoothness and rapidity of soup-plates at the hands of expert waiters, and, at the end, the dazed spectator has the sensation that he has been treated to a reading of "Little Arthur's History" and hustled round the Vatican, Versailles, and the Tower all in a space of an hour and a half, with an incidental trip to Abyssinia to say nothing of a final tour of the Normandie.

—*The Times*

There are altogether seven pearls and Guitry indulges his merry fancy in a modern and absurd investigation to clear up what happened to the three that did not find their way to the British crown. This finishes in Silly Symphony mood, with one of them being dropped overboard from the Normandie and falling straight into the mouth of a waiting oyster. These amusing scenes are out of tone with the rest. But there can be no absolute rules for so oddly constructed a narrative. With all its complicated and episodal contrasts, *The Pearls of the Crown* claims attention as an interesting and unusual picture.

—A. T. Borthwick, *The News Chronicle*

Tales from the Vienna Woods

(Georg Jacoby—Austrian.)

Magda Schneider, Wolf Albach Retty, Leo Slezak.

Tales from the Vienna Woods is as plummy as *strudel*, as thin as *schnitzel*, and as sweet as *schlagobers*. It is a romance with songs from the Strauss motives set in a post-war Vienna in which a motor mechanic owns a castle, a Russian prince runs a garage, and the arrival of an heiress from America sets the whole town celebrating. It is tuneful and pleasant, but not an important picture, except for the appearance in it of Leo Slezak, the W. C. Fields of opera. In a world growing yearly poorer



"Kings, Queens, Cardinals, come and go . . ."

in true clowning, every appearance of Mr. Slezak is important. His rich fruity voice, his unctuous walk, his lordly chicanery, make up a personality as rich in comic genius as any in the modern cinema.

—C. A. Lejeune, *The Sunday Observer*

A romantic, humorous, conventional story has been taken off the shelves—but it serves its purpose admirably, by introducing an ancient castle, a poor but handsome nobleman, an American millionairess and a case of mistaken identity. The whole affair is quite charming. The love story of the little journalist and the Count, who sells motor-cars, doesn't matter. It is the lilt of the waltz, the recapturing of an old-world Vienna, that appeals.

—Gale Pedrick, *The Star*

The Last Night

(Yu. Raizman—Russian.)

The development of assurance and maturity in the Soviet Union is exemplified by two points in this film: the ability to present capitalists as people with courage and loyalty to their principles; and humour. The story deals with the relationship of the family of a worker with that of his employer during the final struggle for power in Moscow in 1917. The head of the working-class family feels an affection and obedience toward his boss which it is very difficult for his revolutionary sailor son to break down. At a college dance, Kuzma, the latter's youngest brother, falls in love with Lena, the daughter of his father's boss. But as they dance, there comes the dull sound of an explosion. The dancers crowd to the windows and, in one of the most striking episodes of the film, we look down through the darkness at the town and listen to the silence, broken only by the scurrying of feet and the rattling of a droshky across the cobbled square. The bias is inevitably toward the working class family. Kuzma saves Lena from arrest by the workers; there is a hint of a love idyll beneath the shell-fire and of the possibility of friendship between Lena and Kuzma's mother. But the class-division reasserts itself when Lena gets back to the protection of the Whites. And, although the workman has been apologetic and genial when his boss is under arrest, the latter riddles him with bullets when the tables are turned. The fighting scenes in the square and at the station show that the Russians have nothing to learn from either Hollywood or Chicago, and make the film as gripping merely as melodrama as "G-Men."

—Henry Adler, *W.F.N.*

PEOPLE OF THE STUDIOS

● GREAT BRITAIN Denham



A nice little war has been brewing between United Artists, Alexander Korda and Oscar Deutsch on the one hand, and all the other distributors on the other. Bone of contention is whether the present system of delayed releases in Britain shall continue or whether the trade can be persuaded to generally release their pictures immediately after the West End showing.

Argument is that the sooner the film is shown provincially after the build-up it gets in London, the bigger the audiences will be. The public's interest in a film dies down after a month or two. Another big point in favour is that receipts on the pictures can be touched at an earlier date than before. (In the U.S. 50% of the cost of a picture is realised within three months of its first showing. In Britain nine or ten months frequently elapse between the completion of a film and its general release.)

It now looks as though Mr. Oscar Deutsch and his Odeons will be able to force the pace they want. General release for *Victoria the Great* was formally fixed for early spring when the excitement had subsided—but Deutsch stepped in with an offer and the picture is to be put over on his entire circuit on December 27th, at the peak of the Christmas season. Which suits Mr. Wilcox, too.

At a meeting of the Board of Directors of London Films it was disclosed that during the past financial eight months, the company had shown a profit of £35,839 subject to depreciation. It was decided to restore the pay cuts of all workers whose salary was up to and including £10 per week. At the moment Korda himself is in America consummating the deal for the purchase of the Chaplin-Fairbanks-Pickford shares in United Artists.

Merle Oberon is the star of *Over the Moon*, only London Film Production at present on the floor. Picture is in Technicolor, and adapted from an original story by Robert Sherwood. Rex Harrison, recently in *Men are not Gods* and *Storm in a Teacup*, plays the lead with Louis Borell. Direction is by William K. Howard, who before starting this picture spent a week or two on the remake of Graham Greene's *Four Dark Hours*. Latter film was made by William Cameron Menzies (of *Things to Come*) as a New World Production earlier in the year.

Donald Stannard, Robert Donat's stand-in who was selected by Bruce Woolfe for *Health and Strength*, the Gaumont-British Instructional film, was spotted by Louis B. Mayer when the latter was in England, and signed up on a long-term contract. He gets a rôle in *A Yank at Oxford* before going out to Hollywood.

First picture under Herbert Wilcox's new R.K.O.-Radio deal will be *The Romance of Madame Tussaud*, based on the life of the famous French aristocrat and written by her grandson, Louis Tussaud. Producer has been seeking Dietrich for the lead.

Beaconsfield

Herbert Wilcox Productions have moved from Pinewood to Beaconsfield for their smaller pictures. Company's current film is *Blondes for Danger*, comedy-thriller with Gordon Harker. Jack Raymond (who made *The Frog*) is directing from a script based on the book by Evadne Price, authoress of "The Phantom Light" at the Haymarket Theatre.

Wilcox's second for British Lion release will be *Nippy*, originally planned for production at Denham with Anna Neagle starring. Jean Gillie now gets the title rôle, with Gordon Harker, Ralph Reader and Richard Hearne in the cast.

Elsewhere . . .

George Formby's current picture at Ealing is *I See Ice*. Anthony Kimmins wrote the story and directs.

New company, Glenrose Productions, started at Cricklewood with *The Vengeance of Kali*. Stewart Rome (whose last picture was *Wings of the Morning*) stars, Gerald Blake directs.

George King is making *Sexton Blake and the Master Criminal* out at Shepperton, with George Curzon and Tod Slaughter in the title rôles.

John Lodge and Margaret Lockwood get top spots in Gainsborough's *Bank Holiday*, before the cameras at Islington. Director is Carol Reed, whose *Talk of the Devil* received considerable praise from the critics.



Otto Kruger plays the lead in *The Housemaster*, Ian Hay comedy in production at Elstree, and Herbert Brenon directs. Pictures planned to follow are *The Guard*, scripted by James Bridie, *The Star of the Circus*,

with John Lodge, and *Yes, Madam*, with Bobbie Howes and Frances Day.

William Dewhurst, benign bomb-maker in *Sabotage*, died last month. His last rôle was the butler in Jessie Matthews' *Sailing Along* at Pinewood.

● AMERICA

Warner Bros.

Mervyn LeRoy started shooting on his new production *Food for Scandal* on November 15th. Carole Lombard and Fernand Gravet (of *The King and the Chorus Girl*) get the top spots, and picture is in Technicolor.

LeRoy is ready to go through with his United Artists deal which will set him up as a producer-owner like Goldwyn and Korda, as soon as the other principals complete their financial arrangements.

Anatole Litvak, who directed the screen version of *Tovarich* with Claudette Colbert and Charles Boyer, has been signed to a three-year contract calling for two pictures a year.

The Life of Paul Jones, which started out a couple of years back as an eight-reel Warner epic with James Cagney in the name rôle, has dwindled to the status of a two-reeler in colour, with John Lytell as Jones.

Current Errol Flynn-Bette Davis picture is Sheridan's comedy, *School for Scandal*.

United Artists

Big question here is "What's Selznick going to do?" When the Korda-Goldwyn deal is fixed, it is unlikely that he will continue his releasing arrangement with United Artists. Alternatively to doing so, it has been rumoured at various times that he will (a) buy up a piece of United Artists; (b) buy up Universal with his brother Myron, now an agent; (c) go back to M.G.M.; (d) produce for Paramount.

With the completion of *Tom Sawyer* production came to a standstill on the Selznick International lot, and the cameras get a rest for four months or so. Studio remains active, however, with preparations for other films—among them, *Gone with the Wind*. The still-continued ballyhoo on the latter picture is probably unprecedented in picture exploitation. The film is already so over-publicised that by the time the picture really gets under way next year the trade will have trouble devising a campaign to top the present one. Reason for all the publicity was the wild guessing on who would get the Scarlet O'Hara role.

A separate print of *Tom Sawyer* is being made for release in Great Britain. William Hamilton Burside, English sales consultant, helped in eliminating American colloquialisms, dialogue and situations that might not have been understood by a British audience. Filming of the picture took a good six months, as on two occasions the footage was scrapped and a new beginning made. The final try took 63 days.

M.G.M.

Hunt Stromberg, who produced *The Thin Man* and *Maytime* for M.G.M., and won the Academy Award for *The Great Ziegfeld*, is as good a man as any to look after the productions which Irving Thalberg had planned. On his recent visit to England and France he worked on the screen adaptation of *Idiot's Delight* with Robert Sherwood, did some important casting for *Marie Antoinette*, and collected local colour for the latter film. Back in Hollywood, he has been looking around for the right man to play Louis XVI, and finally settled on Peter Lorre, who made an excellent screen test. Norma Shearer, now back at work, has the lead in both this and *Idiot's Delight*.

Mr. Stromberg started as a sports writer on the *St. Louis Times*, turning out film scenarios for £20 apiece and always leaning towards the show business. Later he worked for the original Goldwyn company as advertising and publicity director.

Original comedy for Garbo, *Love is not so Simple*, is being readied by Melchior Lengyel, who wrote Dietrich's *Angel*. Story has a continental background, and is Garbo's first break-away from serious drama.



First gangster on the screen was Edward G. Robinson, who with *Little Caesar* started a series of pictures arousing public indignation. Now, with most of America's gangsters behind bars or in their

graves, Robinson is *The Last Gangster*, in a film which we are told is not being made as a preachment. Edward Ludwig, who made *Manhattan Madness*, *Fatal Lady* and *Her Husband Lies*, is the director, since Fox refused to loan-out Roy Del Ruth.

The Freddie Bartholomew controversy ended with an out-of-court settlement. The star now takes a weekly salary of £400 for forty weeks in the year instead of the former £220, and has a seven-year optional contract. As a result of the second court action which involved him, he was allowed to remain under the guardianship of Millicent Bartholomew instead of returning to his parents.

After splitting "for ever" last April, Laurel and Hardy are together again in Hal Roach's *Swiss Cheese*, with John Blystone directing. Film is described as a Tyrolean musical.

Crazy comedy has a new convert—Ronald Colman. Star has agreed to appear under the Hal Roach banner in *Fancy Free*, original comedy by Eric Hatch, who wrote *My Man Godfrey*.

Melvyn Douglas and Warren Williams are in *Arsene Lupin*, which Richard Thorpe is directing.

Columbia

Tay Garnett has closed a deal with the Company to direct *Tradewinds*, using 40,000 feet of sea shots taken on his world cruise. Gene Towne and Graham Baker are at work on the screenplay, and Cary Grant is set as star.

Grace Moore, who has never got on too well with Columbia, has been balking at making pictures "off the cuff." She is under contract with the company to make one picture, with options for another two—but when offered the script of *Easy Sailing* some while back she was quoted as saying: "I'm tired of going into production and having my picture shot off the cuff. I will not be rushed through a picture in four weeks time. I have my standing in the world of music to maintain and I am not going to have music foisted on me." We hear that of late she has been talking a picture deal with Sam Goldwyn.

The Burning Secret, by Stephen Zweig, has been purchased to star Gloria Swanson in her first picture for the studio under her present contract. The continental background of the story has been changed to the United States. Stephen Morehouse Avery, who wrote *The Gorgeous Hussy*, has been scripting.

Paramount

Big picture in production here is *The Buccaneer*, in the Cecil B. DeMille tradition of spectacle, which will keep the cameras busy for a good three months, and 1,700 extras busy for most of that time, too. Franciska Gaal, who has been an important stage and screen actress in Germany and Hungary (her native country) has the female lead and makes her Hollywood debut. Fredric March plays opposite, supported by Akim Tamiroff, Ian Keith and Charles Bickford.

According to a detailed complaint, Paramount libelled *The Police Gazette* in its Mae West picture *Klondike Annie*, which depicted Miss West reading the *Gazette* in a bordello. It was alleged that the monthly magazine was besmirched, and "that by reproducing the trade-mark masthead of the *Gazette*, Paramount sought to convey that the publication is com-



monly read by persons of low, vulgar and indecent tastes, traits and character, and meant also to convey the idea that the publication was generally to be found in resorts for dissolute and unchaste persons." Complaint alleges that the *Gazette's* circulation dropped £10,000 worth as a result.

Don Ameche moves over to Paramount on a loan-out from 20th Century-Fox to co-star with Dorothy Lamour in *Ensenada*. Starting date is scheduled as January 1st. In return for Ameche Paramount lends Randolph Scott to Fox for *Rebecca of Sunnyside Farm*.

George Raft is currently making *Spawn of the North*, with Henry (Souls at Sea) Hathaway directing.

20th Century-Fox

The Walter Winchell-Ben Bernie feud, begun in *Wake up and Live*, is continued in *Love and Hisses*, featuring Simone Simon. Sidney Lanfield, responsible for *Sing, Baby, Sing*, *Thin Ice* and *Wake Up and Live*, is directing. Music and lyrics are by Mack Gordon and Harry Revel—with two numbers sung by Miss Simon.

Cameras are waiting to turn on *Jean*, just as soon as Annabella and William Powell can get together. Script is taken from Ladistas Bus-Fekete's play, "The Lady Has a Heart," now on Broadway.

Darryl Zanuck, Fox chief, recently announced: "20th Century-Fox will abandon the type of all-star musical that it started. Those musicals that had a conglomeration of types of people, big names, small names, names selected from some stand-out entertainment in the past, are no more with us. They are now hurting the business instead of helping in the sale of tickets." He made it quite clear, however, that his decision to abandon all-star musicals did not include productions with stars from his lot such as Sonja Henie, Eddie Cantor, Alice Faye, or the Ritz Brothers. He added that when they started making musicals with James Cagney and dramatic stars and everyone or anyone who could carry a tune, he felt that it was time for his company to stop what it had started.



Universal

Company seems to have had its full quota of contract troubles, on account of Deanna Durbin. Universal executives went into a huddle and finally revised the old contract giving the 14-year-old starlet £250 a week instead of £50. But representatives of Miss Durbin demand £400, plus a voice in the selection of stories.

Squabble also arose over the direction of *Mad About Music*, the current Durbin musical. Henry Koster, director of *Three Smart Girls* and *100 Men and a Girl*, turned down the job for fear of becoming typed as "the man who makes the Durbin pictures," and declared he wanted to build up his name through working with other players. Assignment was also refused by other of Universal's directors who feared difficulties in keeping up the standard set by the star's first two hits.

Norman Taurog, who has just finished *You Can't Have Everything*, finally consented to take on the job, though not until after several weeks negotiating. Koster will probably do the Danielle Darrieux picture as his next.

ITALY

The big deal between Hal Roach and Vittorio Mussolini, mentioned in "People of the Studios" last month, fell through a week or two after it had been announced. While Roach put forward no detailed explanation of how and why the negotiations broke down, it is certain that pressure was brought from the inside, and that he was loth to go against the anti-Fascist feeling widespread in Hollywood.



In spite of Hal Roach remarking with emphasis that young Mussolini wrote the screen column for his father's paper and was the only one to knock Italian productions and praise American films, the film capital granted Mussolini a cool reception, nick-naming him "War is Fun" Vittorio.

Three polite brush-offs in one day by actors on lots in production, the sending of ambulances to Spain, autographed by 100 players, the concerted drive on the part of the anti-Nazi league against his presence in the town, and President Roosevelt's Chicago speech against war-diseased nations, proved too much for the 21-year-old son of Il Duce, who departed after only a short stay.

The following full-page advertisement was among those that greeted him: "TODAY—Benito Mussolini confers with Hitler in Berlin . . . TOMORROW—Vittorio Mussolini arrives in Hollywood. He asked for—and received—the privilege of being the first aviator to bomb helpless Ethiopians. Anyone has the right to be in America, but we submit that his presence here is not an occasion for celebrations or social fêtes. Those who are welcoming him are opening their arms to a friend of Hitler and an enemy of democracy. TONIGHT—We call attention to the presence in democratic America of this protagonist of fascism and nazism . . ."

The papers also reprinted passages from Vittorio's articles in *Il Popolo d'Italia*, to challenge Roach's statement that he "knocked Italian made productions and praised American films." Among those quoted were:

"The humoristic papers have found a new outlet for their quips at the expense of celebrated stars and cinematograph magnates with the habitual Havana cigar in their mouths, and the public are given further proof of the lack of intelligence and seriousness to be found in the mass of people who live in the Californian Mecca. Is this an effect of the sun?"

Answering his own hypothetical question as to what the rest of the world would do if Hollywood closed down for a year ("a kind of flood without the ark, which would be blessed by the goodly few . . . never again to see the ears of Clark Gable, or Dietrich's legs, or Garbo's feet, or Joan Crawford's mouth, or Katharine Hepburn's nose, or Luise Rainer's eyes, or Goldwyn's and Ziegfeld's ballet girls . . .") he considers the case of each European country, winding up with this regarding Italy:

"Perhaps in the space of five or six years we may get ahead. In any case we are equipped and ready. We are working at full swing and more enthusiastically, and we shall soon fill Cine City. Even the smallest capitalists will have an opportunity of doing their part and of making an economic film. . . ."

COCKA

Compiled by

BREATHLESS HUSH DEPT.

Freddie Bartholomew, the clever British boy star, has caused some anxiety to the Metro-Goldwyn studio, by showing signs that he was losing his English accent.

The officials contacted "Aunt Cissy", Freddie's mentor, and told her that she must safeguard the boy's broad "A's" and cure faulty aspirates.

It sounds like a typical Hollywood story, but a friend assures me that when Freddie says his prayers at night, after invoking blessings on Aunt Cissy, his parents and other relatives and friends, he beseeches that he be permitted to retain his English accent!

—News Item.

As soon as we read this and realised what a tremendous field for research it opened up, we contacted our Bedside Correspondent and suggested that he weigh in with a little human interest stuff on the subject of the requests made by film-stars in their nightly supplications. Just to save him from himself, we took it upon ourselves to compile a list of suitable bed-sides for him to visit.

If we can believe our Bedside Correspondent—and there is no reason why we should—the majority of stars are either sent to bed by their parents, or carried there by friends, and

A HAPPY CHRISTMAS TO OUR REGISTERED
READERS ONLY.

their prayers are, therefore, of the sketchiest nature. Others employ the time usually spent in prayer in standing before their mirrors, rehearsing their acceptance of an Academy Award.

An exception to this is Shirley Temple, who usually finds time to lisp a few lines and signs off by wishing a million-dollar set of freckles on all the Infant Prodigies toddling frantically in her wake. Clark Gable invariably asks for advice about his ears, and Herbert Marshall for strength to continue doing the Decent Thing. Fred Astaire indents for a good arch-supporter, while from the bedside of Joe E. Brown there rises a nightly plea that he may one day be granted a real man-sized mouth. Something more on the lines of Miss Crawford's.

But by far the most poignant prayer that came to the ears of our Bedside Correspondent was that of a British film-producer, who hitched up his fur-lined nightie, sank on to his chubby little knees and, after invoking blessings on the Quota Act, voiced an impassioned plea for assistance with his aspirates and police protection at the next general meeting.

Kiss and Make Up

The lips of Greta Garbo, Lily Pons, Gertrude Niessen and Lyda Roberti must be especially made up after their kissing scenes for the screen, according to Max Factor, veteran make-up artist, who terms them "heavyweight kissers."

Billie Burke, Loretta Young, Mae West and Alice Faye, on the other hand, are "lightweight kissers", whose rouge and powder are hardly disturbed by their romantic moments before the cameras.

—News Item.

Greta Garbo,
Lily Pons,
Kiss like playful
Mastodons.
Miss Roberti
And Miss Niessen
Much resemble
Charging bison,*
When advancing
To bestow
Kisses on
Their movie beaux.
This is plainly
Apt to shake up
Mr. Factor's
Precious make-up.

Mighty Mae
And lithe Loretta
Are, they say,
A whole lot better.
Billie Burke
And Alice Faye
Also work
A gentler way.
Each of these
When she caresses
With no vim
Or vigour presses.
So from their
Inviting lips,
It's claimed the colour
Never slips.

I've a hunch
That I could move it—
Boy! for just one chance to
prove it!

*Pronounced "beeson", whether you like it or not.

SAYINGS

"Much of the money wasted by foreign producers has been attributable . . . to an inability to understand our language."—*British Association of Film Directors.*

"The word 'lover' in the United States so frequently connotes an illicit sex relation."—*The Motion Picture Producers and Distributors of America Inc.*

MY, HOW YOU'VE GROWN!

The transition of Shirley Temple from irresponsible moppet to winsome young woman, skipping that awkward, lanky stage we other girls had to go through, has been more than adequately dwelt upon by our newspaper scribes.

We of this department feel that a little of the publicity that greeted this phenomenon might well have been accorded to Snooks Grieser, W.F.N.'s satanic lift-boy, who is himself negotiating the perilous deeps of adolescence.

Snooks can now be said to be in the first flush of manhood, and a very fine flush it is. The lift has had to be enlarged to accommodate his new and ever-increasing stature, and it has been noticed that the female staff now prefer to walk the three flights of stairs to their offices. This may be due to the Keep Fit campaign, or not. We have our own ideas.

Interviewed at the Grieser home in Bethnal Green, Snooks' mother said: "We're all ever so proud of Snooks now that he's reached opalescence. Most boys seem to go through an awkward stage, but apart from a boil on the back of his neck, he's been no trouble to us at all. My husband—the rat—will probably want Snooks to do his hair differently, but you can tell your readers from me that not a single curl will be cut."

"Girl friends?" said Mrs. Grieser, in answer to our leering inquiry. "Snooks is young yet, and though he has had several young ladies in for a bowl of welks, he has yet to meet 'Miss Right'. Romance," said Mrs. Grieser, tying up the ends of a black pudding with deft fingers, "can wait."

All those who are interested in the future of our lift-boy will, we are sure, be glad to hear Mrs. Grieser's reassuring words. We ourselves are taking a keen interest in his welfare. Only yesterday the Editor took him aside to tell him the Facts of Life, and was able to learn one or two new ones himself. Meanwhile we should like to reassure Snooks' many friends that he is still to be found in the *World Film News* lift, continuing with the career he has cut out for himself and surrounded by some rather questionable photographs which we have cut out for him.

"OH, YES, HE'S ALWAYS BEEN LIKE THAT, POOR CHAP. HIS MOTHER WAS FRIGHTENED BY AN ODEON."

L O R U M

Rodney Hobson

It makes a nice change!

We of *World Film News* do not think solely and exclusively in terms of the cinema. We are fully aware of the fact that there *are* other forms of entertainment being furtively practised not a thousand miles from Wardour Street, and we take the liveliest interest in their welfare. Why, whenever we meet Sir John Reith in a passage, we are the first to stop and give him an encouraging word, remembering our own early struggles; and then, patting him benevolently on the noggin with our stout ash-stick, we pass on, intent on our own—or somebody else's—business.

You can imagine, then, how gleefully we clapped our chubby little hands together when we happened, in the columns of the *Evening Standard*, upon a startling exposure of the way some of our Front-Page Personalities behave before the microphone. Listen to this:

Mr. Harold Nicolson, considered a master of broadcast technique, imagines that he is visiting a sick maiden aunt in a nursing home. She is not allowed to read, but likes visitors for short periods.

Mr. Nicolson keeps a metaphorical eye on the door, as the nurse may arrive at any moment to say that his time is up, and employs a bedside manner which is at the same time bright and informative.

We have been privileged to see Mr. Nicolson in action at the mike and we are in a position to tell our readers more about his methods. For instance, when Mr. Nicolson's voice sounds all far away and ethereal, this is due not to emotion or to asthma, but to the fact that he has had to move over to Auntie's bedside to remove a copy of the *Paris Magazine* from her feverish fingers, or to scoop the day's accumulation of breadcrumbs from the bottom of the bed. Those dual thuds that can sometimes be heard punctuating Mr. Nicolson's broadcast talks are caused by Auntie throwing grapes at him across the studio.

All the time he is talking, Mr. Nicolson is keeping his metaphorical eye on the door for the nurse. She is of course, a purely metaphorical nurse called Mabel, who smells of iodine and is a great favourite with the boys at the Bolivar. They never tire of listening to her racy reminiscences of the sick-room and by the end of the evening many an endearing message is pencilled on her starched cuffs.

Of course, there are many other methods. Sir Samuel Hoare, we are told, always imagines he is sitting in a farmer's cottage in Norfolk, talking to the farmer and his wife. The remarks of the farmer and his wife, who wanted nothing more than a quiet evening in front of the fire, are not reproduced.

An interesting point—and one that is very little known—in connection with Sir Samuel's broadcasts, is that he strengthens the agricultural atmosphere by having Earl Baldwin walk across the studio every now and then,

leading a prize bull. The studio floor is generally spread with a few inches of fertiliser and to complete the illusion, a horse-box is waiting to take him home when his talk is over.

The man whose microphone manner approaches most closely to our own, is Sir Kingsley Wood. Sir Kingsley, it seems, stands rigidly before the instrument, fixes it with a glassy eye, and addresses it as though it were a committee or board meeting. We string along with Sir Kingsley as far as the glassy eye is concerned, but we are influenced by Sir Samuel Hoare in so far as we imagine ourselves to be sitting in a farm-house with the farmer's wife, knowing that the farmer won't be back for a couple of days.

That's the kind of man we are. Nothing is sacred to us.

MORE SAYINGS

"Those who make the Cheddar Caves and Gorge the subject of cheap wit have no sense of sanctity." —*The Mayor of Nottingham*

"I've been sued before—by experts." —*W. C. Fields.*

"When my plans are settled—which will be in about forty years—I'll announce them." —*Noel Coward.*

MY SECRETARY'S SO DUMB SHE THINKS THAT—

A talent scout is a patrol-leader with the most badges.

The Ritz Brothers are a firm of lawyers.

Paul Rotha is a brand of champagne:

That *Elephant Boy* is about Alfred Hitchcock.

That Krampf is what people get swimming.

That Ratoff is the name of a vermicide.

That the Oxford Group is a photo of the Boat Race crew.

Back to those Scrappy Days

A gramophone company has recently issued a catalogue of "Mood Music", published "in response to requests from producers of plays, pageants, films and any occasion that calls for a specialised musical background or interval."

The "Effects" are said to be the most promising of all. These include "Crowd Effect or Angry Mob"; "Clashing Swords and Crowd Murmurs"; "Pack of Hounds" and "Dog Fight."

It is rumoured that a number of British film-producers are clubbing together to buy these records so that, in their declining years, they may still be surrounded by the sounds so familiar to them during their careers.



"Like to go to the movies to-night, Mabel?"

RADIO

AMERICAN RADIO

by Thomas Baird

AUTUMN brings United States listeners radio entertainment in every field—a variety of musical programmes ranging from the classical to “swing”; comedy contributed by America’s leading comedians; dramatic features from Broadway and Hollywood; and full hour variety programmes including in their scope all three of the above elements.

Returning programmes include Al Jolson’s show presenting Martha Raye, Eddie Cantor and his company including Deanna Durbin, and Kate Smith makes her bow in variety. Jack Oakie resumes. Jeanette MacDonald introduces a new programme. “Sunday Afternoon Silver Theatre” had its premiere performance starring Rosalind Russell, with Conrad Nagel acting as director and narrator. Barbara Stanwyck, star of the film *Stella Dallas*, re-enacted the role of the sacrificing mother when she played the leading part in a radio adaptation of the drama. Tallulah Bankhead and Henry Fonda, were co-starred in the famous *Camille*. Bankhead recently scored a radio success in the G.B.S. Shakespearean production of *Twelfth Night* as Viola. Warren William is to be heard with Gladys George and John Beal in a radio version of the famous story, *Madame X*. A new type of musical programme, to be called *Music from Hollywood*, and made up almost exclusively of melodies produced in the film centre where the pick of the nation’s song writers have congregated. Scenes from *Wife, Doctor and Nurse* were played by Warner Baxter and Loretta Young, when they appeared as guest stars of *Hollywood Hotel*. Janet Gaynor was starred with Robert Montgomery in a radio adaptation of *A Star is Born* as the first of a new Autumn series of dramatic broadcasts. Sylvia Sydney, star of the motion picture *Dead End*, vivid drama of New York slum life, played in a radio version of the play on the Kate Smith Variety Hour.

Edward G. Robinson stars in a new dramatic series based on newspaper life. Robinson plays the role of a crusading managing editor of a tabloid newspaper in a large American city. Each will be a timely adaptation from the American news front, written by a battery of ace radio playwrights. The large supporting cast will be headed by Claire Trevor, prominent on stage and screen. Miss Trevor will play the part of a society editor of the paper, each episode will be complete in itself, although there will be a connecting thread running through the entire series. Fred MacMurray stars with Madge Evans in an air adaptation of the comedy success, *Up Pops the Devil*, in the broadcast produced by Cecil B. DeMille.

The forward march of one of Radio’s processions of top-ranking stars is being witnessed by the listeners of the “Radio Theatre” series.

The remarkable total of 132 outstanding actors and actresses of screen and stage has been presented in over 100 hour-length radio adaptations of successful vehicles of motion pictures and legitimate theatre. Four of these actors—Wallace Beery, Robert Montgomery, Herbert Marshall and Clark Gable—have made four appearances on the series. Three of the plays have had repeated performances. They are *Alias Jimmy Valentine*, *Dodsworth* and *Dulcy*.

In the list of those whom listeners have heard in three separate presentations is included Richard Barthelmess, Joan Crawford, Elissa Landi, Joe E. Brown, John Boles, Fred MacMurray, Robert Taylor, Olivia De Havilland, Gary Cooper, and Madge Evans. Twenty-four stars have been recalled for second “Radio Theatre” performances. These include Ruth Chatterton, John Beal, Jack Oakie, Frank Morgan, Edward G. Robinson, Lionel Barrymore, George N. Cohan, Sally Eilers, Irene Dunne, Fay Bainter, Marlene Dietrich, Franchot Tone,



Barbara Stanwyck, Grace Moore, Adolphe Menjou, Frances Farmer, Claudette Colbert, Jean Arthur, Errol Flynn, Fredric March, Florence Eldridge, Josephine Hutchinson, Walter Huston, and Nan Sunderland.

Artists who have appeared but once are Ethel Barrymore, Joan Bennett, William Gillette, Grace George, Eve Le Gallienne, Lawrence Tibbett, William Powell, Myrna Loy, Lily Pons, Jean Harlow, Ann Harding, Leslie Howard and many others. Prominent among the recent entertainment successes which have been adapted for the series are *Cavalcade*, *Mr. Deed Goes to Town*, *Death Takes a Holiday*, *Farewell To Arms*, *Mary of Scotland*, *The Front Page*, *Cimarron*.

Interspersed with these more modern creations have been favourites of more than one generation—*Lightning*, *Sherlock Holmes*, *Way Down East*, *Graustak*, *Brewster’s Millions*, *Under Two Flags*, *The Plainsman*, *Monsieur Beaucaire*, *Beau Brummell*, *Trilby*, *The Virginian*, *Girl of the Golden West* and *Get-Rich-Quick-Wallingsford*.

A Suggestion for B.B.C. Radio Drama

THE B.B.C. has always set a good pace in radio drama. The drama department was doing experimental work in the new form when other countries were groping towards a beginning. *Squirrel’s Cage* by Tyrone Guthrie is still one of the best radio plays of all time and it was first produced as far back as 1928. It is essentially the stuff that radio is made of. Since then radio drama as a whole has advanced. It has become more technically perfect and more subtle. There is less of life and more of art.

This is not altogether a bad thing in spite of the outpourings of the realists. It is right and proper that the drama group at the B.B.C. should on occasions take themselves to the outposts of their art in a crusading fashion and good may be done even if we do not all follow immediately into this rarefied atmosphere.

Val Gielgud’s adaptation of Belloc’s *Marie Antoinette*, broadcast as *Death of a Queen*, was an example of this subtler technique. It is conventionalised drama and very good drama of this kind. It is still genuinely dramatic in spite of being involved but in virtue of being involved it is difficult. Because it is difficult probably only a minority will readily like it. Again this is not wholly a fault. Minority audiences have certain rights . . . but within limits. I think the B.B.C. are observing these limits.

Much more important is the distinction, not between minority and majority, but between life and art which the B.B.C. has made explicit in having a drama department and an actuality department. Both are experimenting along diverging paths. One is getting more life on to the air and the other is becoming more and more subtle and polished and away from life.

Escape is not a bad thing . . . again in spite of realists. It is to escape that we go on holiday and I have met realists on holiday and in the most unreal of holiday places. It is to escape that we go to the theatre and anyone who goes for any other reason is up the wrong alley. It is to escape that we play darts, cricket, shove ha’penny and polo and go to see the Arsenal.

The fault with the B.B.C. drama department is that it does not lead enough of us away from life. In its subtlety and polished difficulty it does not carry the crowd. Radio is essentially a medium of mass communication. It must lead the majority up the garden with its melodrama, its pipers must pipe the millions out of their living-rooms, its variety must rock the houses of all England on a Saturday night.

Actuality is a different problem. It must still address the masses, or Radio Luxemburg will cash in, but the essential here is reporting. It is a journalists’ job. They should be near the life of England reporting it dramatically. They must

RADIO

Reply to George Audit

by D. G. Bridson of the B.B.C. Drama Department

Radio Drama (contd.)

give real life an imaginative appeal but it must not become life dramatised into unreality.

It means training people to appreciate life as it is lived, training them to shake off all the glamour which the drama department should cultivate.

And here is my suggestion to the B.B.C.

All over the country there are amateur theatrical groups; in the British Drama League, the Scottish Community Drama Association and in church halls and welfare clubs. These groups perform plays, some good and some bad. In spite of their own energy and the patience of their friends who make up the audiences they are fighting a too strong opposition. You can see a film for a sixpence and you can go to a more legitimate theatre at no more cost than the amateurs are asking for admission to their shows. One can even stay at home and listen to the wireless.

In spite of this disparagement, however, there is a great tide of life in this movement and where a few bright souls have directed its energies into experiment, some notable work has been done. The B.B.C. could do a great service to these hopefuls and to themselves if they adopted some of these experimental groups. Some of them, I know, have given life to radio drama in the provinces. The Scottish National Players have been the backbone of radio drama in the Scottish region. I would like to see some of this energy being enlisted on the actuality side.

Some of these essentially local groups might well become the B.B.C.'s reporters, commentators and authors in the actuality field. Their drama could be the drama of real life—the drama of their own life. I should like it if, for example, some of the Scottish drama groups in the Islands were to forget Joe Corrie for a year and write their own account of life on their island and put it on the air with the help of the actuality department. I would like a local club in Lancashire to leave off *Quality Street* and *Pygmalion* for a year and link up with the B.B.C. to tell the story of cotton. John R. Allen's programmes from Buchan give a key to the possibilities.

The B.B.C. might go farther and link up with the drama courses in our Universities and in our Training Colleges which yearly turn out a batch of graduates and teachers enthusiastic over a type of drama which has little chance in the modern set-up. These people might instead be trained as amateur radio-producers for these local groups who are to be our regional and local interpreters.

The drama department has found its way to art: this suggestion might help the actuality department to find its way to life.

THOMAS BAIRD

I HAVE such a respect for the opinions of your Radio Critic, Mr. George Audit, that I am very loth to correct a slight misunderstanding that seems to have crept into his notice of an article of mine which appears in the current number of *Ariel*. But since the fault is mine no less than the article, perhaps he will allow me to make myself a bit clearer than I troubled to do in a staff magazine which I never expected him to light upon anyway!

When I made my plea for "Shockers", I was not actually making a plea for gangster plays or anything out of the usual run of programmes put out by the B.B.C. at present. So far as my intentions went, *Yes and Back Again* was just as much a shocker (i.e. a programme which "shocked" into activity emotion of one sort or another) as *The Thin Man* or *The Anatomist*. All that my plea boiled down to was a simple wish that radio dramatists would construct their plays in such a way that they seized hold of some emotion or other of the listener, and exploited it. An unexpected gag, which jumps out on the listener's sense of humour and makes him laugh when he least expects to do so, is a "shock" (in the sense I meant for the word), just as genuine as the sudden firing of a gun behind the listener's chair.

A "shocker" then, is just one sort of a programme which gets hold of the listener's emotions in a particular way. That way is one which I have used in various of my shows. I used it, for instance, in *The March of the '45*—where some of the effects which Mr. Audit has actually praised, were obtained by various little technical tricks which drew his emotions up one back alley and suddenly jerked them into another. The same tricks were also used in my programme *Steel*.

But while the example of *Steel* may have been a bad one to cite in defence of the theory, I think the theory is sound enough for all that. As I say, I could have explained it by examples drawn from far more successful programmes, either of mine or of anyone else's. But before dropping the subject, I should just like to put in a plea for the class of programme which *Steel* was intended to originate. Mr. Audit complains that I padded it out with verse, and also complains that verse is unsuitable for a programme on a steel foundry. I would not, he says, use verse in a Harry Hopeful programme—therefore, why use it for a programme which treated of similar raw material? The answer is that I should be just as ready to use verse in a programme descriptive or evocative of one of the districts covered by Harry Hopeful as I would be to do a Harry Hopeful show from a Steel Works the week after a verse show.

Steel, in fact, never was an actuality show, or ever pretended to be. It was a documentary show conceived on a musical basis, and described as an "industrial symphony". And if it was a bad symphony, I can only protest that somebody else might nevertheless be able to write a good one—

even using the same themes. Perhaps the most satisfying "response" which I have had to the show came from one of our documentary film producers. It left him, he said, with a violent desire to make a documentary film in a Steel Works, to which it could run as a sound track. The emotional effect for which I had been playing, he felt, could have been obtained more decisively if the eye had at the same time been seeing what I was writing about. If the visual image would not always have been the same as the spoken image (it frequently wouldn't have been) the effect would actually have been heightened by the clash—as was the case in Pudovkin's film *The Deserter*, where sound and visual tracks were purposely set at odds here and there.

That, as a matter of fact, was what I was hoping to hear about the programme. I was taking it for granted that the listener had before his mind's eye the pictures on which I was building by analogy—and obviously not many of them possibly could have had. Now to expect something like that is tantamount to saying that one is in experimental mood—and *Steel* was confessedly an experiment (whereas Harry Hopeful, God rest his boots, most certainly ain't). And if the experiment failed, as I said before, I hope Mr. Audit won't condemn me for having made it, or will condemn the theory behind it for the sake of a bad example. Sooner or later, I have a feeling, someone is going to write a whale of a good programme along exactly the same lines. And if I can't claim to have rung the bell myself, I can at least claim to have hung it up and handed on the hammer.

George Audit writes:—

Mr. Bridson gave the bell such a mighty clap with "*The March of the '45*" that many of us still carry its sound in our ears. That was a "shocker", if you like. Until radiodrama makes its plays out of the tough problems of war and peace, labour and unemployment, hunger and the home, or uses plays like those of Isben, Shaw, O'Neill, Gorki, and others that do, we shall not be "shocked" by it. I only wish to say to Mr. Bridson that such material cannot be presented in the manner of "*Steel*." "*Steel*," apart from the unsuitability of much of the verse (good though it may be in itself) failed because it concentrated attention on, almost defying, the *Steel* production process, instead of the human beings who created and operated. In so doing, he was compelled to use poetic description of his abstract subject. He says himself he expected his listeners to have seen a foundry. My criticism, last month, was precisely that because listeners cannot see the subject, the radio producer must go out of his way to suggest its actuality and presence by indirect means. In "*Steel*", a workman's description in plain English would often have been more effective than a storm of verse and music. Mr. Bridson wants another programme on the same lines. If he fails with "*Steel*", nobody can succeed. Won't he try again?

THEATRE

THE HABIMA PLAYERS

THIS famous company is of particular interest to the makers of films. While playing in Yiddish in Russia and now in Hebrew throughout Europe, they are compelled to adopt a mimetic method which will explain what the strangeness of their language prevents them from doing. This, perhaps, is what some makers of films in this country may find it necessary to do for audiences abroad when they wish to avoid 'dubbing' and sub-titles. The Habima Players have transformed this compulsion into an artistic virtue. The expressiveness of gesture, the vividness of colour, the grouping of the crowds, the character in their most insignificant member, combine to make *The Dybbuk* a theatrical experience, whether or not one has knowledge of Hebrew. The plot is based on the Ghetto superstition that an unhappy spirit could inhabit the body of a living person. The dead Hanan lives on in the frame of his beloved Leah, so that she is only sometimes herself and at others speaks with his voice, is dominated by his soul. The play tells how the spirit is exorcised but only at the expense of the death of Leah, exhausted in breaking through the spells dividing her from her lover.

The story is not important. What is important is the superb dramatic quality of pace, change of mood, grouping, colour, which make the second act, wherein Leah is to marry someone she does not love, and dances with halt and blind beggars.

IBSEN'S GHOSTS

Is Ibsen dead? When I spoke of him to one of the Habima players, he said that Ibsen had no appeal for him, because his language lacked poetry—an argument used by Synge. But go to the Vaudeville and see if his grip has relaxed in *Ghosts*. In these days of abstract drama, it is good to turn to Ibsen and see how he can present an abstract problem in terms of a concrete problem, how his poetry owes its lyricism and its austerity to having its roots in our normal everyday world. It is to be noted that he does not specify what disease Alving transmitted to his son. We have been too apt to assume that *Ghosts* is an attempt to show up the evils of venereal disease. It may do so incidentally, but its main object is to show that a train of evil cannot be stopped by ignoring it nor by pious sentiments. "The sins of the fathers are visited on the children", and Mrs. Alving sees and hears in Oswald making love to his half-sister Regina the ghosts of his father and her mother—the same evils perpetuated through fear of facing and telling the truth. Symbolically, that shrewd business man, Pastor Manders, insures all Mrs. Alving's material property but not the orphanage—not so much because God himself might be offended by this lack of trust in his benevolent watchfulness, as because religious-minded men of influence might be so offended. And the orphanage is burned down, at the moment when Regina and Oswald learn their true relationship of half-brother and sister, and learn how the respected

Mrs. Alving has destroyed their futures in the same way as the orphanage is even then being destroyed by the carelessness of such as Pastor Manders whose business it was to take every care for its protection. "The sins of the fathers are visited on the children." The ghosts of the old sins live on. The suppression of truth for the sake of a false convention, the restriction of the fine vital energy of Mr. Alving into squalid adventures, results in evil. The truth of human nature must be faced, said Ibsen, or evil results, and it will not be stopped by turning the eyes worshippingly up to Heaven.

Mrs. Alving, who has recognised that Ibsenite truth through her experiences with her husband, is willing that Oswald should marry Regina, despite their close blood relationship, rather than that he should be thwarted and driven into vice like his father. But Regina is too full of her father's joy in life, and she flounces out of the house to fulfil that joy rather than nurse the invalid Oswald, whether as lover or as sister. In Regina survives the healthy vital side of her father. In Oswald survives the diseased consequences of the frustration of that vitality. So Regina goes to life, and Oswald waits for death in that terrible ending of the play with the mother poisoning her son through love and desire to protect him from suffering.

Miss Marie Ney's Mrs. Alving was an intense and beautifully controlled characterisation—pale-faced, worn, educated and exhausted by experience. Her scenes with Mr. Stephen Murray as the haggard, well-meaning, foolish Pastor Manders were duets, perfectly timed and blended. Her final scene with Oswald was beautifully done by her, although I personally did not find the mewing note in her weeping moving. Mr. Clifford Evans as Oswald was out of key with the other actors. He played the part too much on his nerves, with some melodramatic tricks of voice and gesture. The Regina of Miss Silvia Coleridge was a pretty little minx with a calculating brain.

SHAKESPEARE by G.B.S.

The main interest to most people in the production of *Cymbeline* at the Embassy will be the revision of the last act by Mr. Shaw. The play is certainly dull, a third-rate *Romeo and Juliet* and, although action is quickened by playing it on one set and before a drop curtain, Mr. van Gyseghem will probably be able to get swifter production than was evident at the dress rehearsal.

Why should *Cymbeline* be revised? *Cymbeline* says Mr. Shaw, "though one of the finest of Shakespeare's later plays, always on the stage goes to pieces in the last act, which is a tedious string of unsurprising denouements sugared with insincere sentimentality after a ludicrous stage battle, a masque very incongruously interpolated because masques were fashionable under King Jamie, and a silly Mother Shipton prophecy." Mr. Shaw has aimed, not at re-writing Shakespeare, but at candidly Shavian variations on the Shakespearean theme in the same way as, to quote Mr. Shaw's own example, Beethoven's variations

on Diabelli's "vulgar little waltz" were candidly his own.

The result is very amusing—as though *Man and Superman* had been grafted on *Romeo*. The sons restored to their father, King Cymbeline, inform him that they are too old now to experience any thrill at finding a father. When offered the throne, they reject it with horror, commenting on the cage in which a king lives, and which prevents him even from marrying the woman he loves.

Imogen becomes Ann Whitehead, and Posthumous, not John Tanner, but representative of the crass brutal male from which woman has to suffer so much. Imogen cites the thoroughly dirty trick which Posthumous has played on her as but an example of what happens when man holds the dominating position. It would not have been surprising if she had held out for equal pay for equal work. The Shakespearean complications are given short shrift. "Are there any more plots to unravel?" demands Cymbeline. Most Shavian touch of all, when Iachimo, who has exchanged his Shakespearean villainy for some of Mr. Shaw's benign cynicism, wittily pleads with Imogen for Posthumous's sake, she says: "I refuse to laugh. Laughter destroys anger, and prevents murder."

Mr. André van Gysseghem has accelerated action by the use of one set (a staircase on either side of a central arch with a platform on top of it), alternately with action before the drop curtain.

MOURNING BECOMES ELECTRA

In *Mourning Becomes Electra* at the Westminster, the Ancient Greek tragedy is re-enacted in an American household of the last century, with the Greek emphasis on the omnipotence of Fate confirmed and amplified by the modern insight into the forces of the sub-conscious which are stronger than reason, stronger than will, stronger than justice. *Electra* is Lavinia Mannon and Orestes is her brother Orin whom she spurs to kill Aegisthus in the person of Captain Adam Brant, lover of her mother Christine and poisoner by the latter's persuasion of Brigadier-General Ezra Mannon, Christine's husband and Lavinia's father. The settings confirm the classical allusion of the title. The Mannon house has before it a temple portico which, to quote Eugene O'Neill's stage direction, "is like an incongruous grey mask fixed on the house to hide its sombre grey ugliness."

In its profundity and scope, its concern with the soul, its ability to transmute what might be mere melodrama into metaphysical grandeur, this play may be called Shakespearean. Beside Miss Beatrix Lehmann's magnificent, relentless performance as Lavinia, Mr. Robert Harris's playing of Orin, with the madness never over-stressed but always there, and Miss Laura Cowie's Christine are to be mentioned, and a tribute paid to the cast and to Mr. Michael MacOwen's production of this fine play. Although it begins at 6.30, there are intervals. But, even if there were not, the play would compensate for your suppers.

HENRY ADLER

NEWSREEL RUSHES

NEWSREEL

NOTES

BY THE

COMMENTATOR

Voice Staffs

If ever there is formed a trade union of radio and newsreel commentators, it will boast the world's most widely assorted band of members. For commentating as a career is still so new that none of the men and women who now spend most of their days and many of their nights as the eyes and ears of the rest of the world, have been at it all their lives. They have graduated to the microphone from every conceivable occupation, bound only by one common qualification: that a benign Providence has given them the right shape of vocal organs.

Fan Voices

In the last few years, as newsreels have speeded up their presentation, the importance of the commentator has grown in step. Where once "the picture told the story", eventually it became the commentator "telling" and the picture "illustrating" the most photogenic incidents. Then America discovered that even a disembodied voice could express so much of the personality of its owner, as to build up a "fan" interest. Radio started the era of the plugged commentator. Soon the newsreels followed, and "big name" voices moved into the big money class.

America's Star Commentators

To-day almost all America's biggest microphone names are free-lance. They tie themselves to a certain series of commercially sponsored radio programmes; but are free to work directly for the broadcasting companies for sport and news relays, and to "strip talk" regularly for one or other of the newsreels. Commentator of the U.S. Movietone is Lowell Thomas, who also does a regular radio news editorial, came to London to broadcast the coronation to the U.S. America's Pathé News uses Clem McCarthy, white haired, middle-aged "Dean" of radio sports commentators. British listeners heard some of his remarks at the end of the relay of the Farr-Louis fight. On the M.G.M. reel "News of the Day," the voice is that of Jean Paul King, and on the U.S. Universal, Graham McNamee, both featured commentators of the National Broadcasting Company. Thus all American reels treat the voice as among their biggest selling features—with one great exception.

Nameless Policy

From the first recorded word on its sound tracks, Paramount News has held rigidly to the policy of complete anonymity for its commentators. That policy is practised with equal fervour by British Paramount. On both sides of the Atlantic the company has been at pains, not so much to shroud its voices in mystery, but to deny the importance of their work. To say,

in effect: "commentators exist only to pad out the weak spots in our pictures—almost anyone can do that—so why worry about identification!" In Britain, Paramount are not alone in hiding their vocal identity; but in the U.S. they faced a unanimous blast of publicity trumpets from the commentators of their rival reels. The blast was too hard, it blew Paramount over.

Nameless Policy Reversed

Last month, to celebrate its tenth anniversary, America's Paramount News announced the formation of what it grandly calls a "Voice Staff." "Chief of Staff" (i.e. Head Commentator) is Gabriel Heatter; under him are eight others. Thus with nine voices Paramount sets up a record: for even multivoiced Movietone has never employed more than seven. Meanwhile British Paramount continues mum about the names of its two commentators, and Editor Cummins "won't talk" about the possibility of the U.S. reversal of policy being reflected in Britain. But it is a well-known Wardour Street fact that the American parent company keeps a pretty tight hold on its British branch; so British Paramount's two mystery voices may yet find their names in the headlines.

Mixed Lot

With other British reels there have been no commentating changes for at least three years. Most famous of Britain's voices is E. V. H. Emmett of the Gaumont-British News. His style is a rather dull monotone, livened by a natural wit that must be almost unique, and puts him in the world class as a laugh raiser. Emmett trained for the stock exchange, joined the G.B. News in the silent days as a cutter, was sent out on one of the earliest sound stories "just to point out the important items" via the microphone. No one was more amazed than he at the bubble of mirth that greeted the first hearing of those casual remarks. Emmett has never looked back. He enjoys one enormous advantage over his rivals, in that he controls the cutting of all

G.B. stories. So picture, and commentary always match to a fraction of an inch; the secret of his invariably perfect comedy timing.

Uncle Jeff

Universal Talking News features R. E. Jeffry, plugging his name on the Main Title in true American style. Jeffry was a pioneer with the old British Broadcasting Co., Uncle Jeff of the Children's Hour. To-day he is still Uncle Jeff to thousands of newsreel fans, who worry less about the news, sit back to enjoy homely chit-chat in Jeffry's slow, heavily emphasised, fireside manner. For the last three years, Pathé Gazette has used ex-B.B.C. announcer Roy de Groot, who, at 20 joined the B.B.C., and became in turn studio announcer, outside broadcast commentator, programme producer. With a rolling bass, de Groot is best at drama and tragedy, he put so much feeling into his description of the King George V funeral, that Pathé News of America put out the British version with his voice, in cinemas from coast to coast.

Fifteen Million a Week

Following the practice of their American counterpart, Movietone employs a staff of commentators, headed by speed-king Sir Malcolm Campbell, who, however, makes only rare appearances. Other Movietone voices: Eric Dunstan, ex-B.B.C. announcer, smart clubman, journalist; Leslie Mitchell, ex-actor, whose main job is B.B.C. television announcer; Ivan Scott, former musical-comedy juvenile lead, also Movietone News Editor; Alan Howland; Beryl de Querton, Britain's only regular commentatrice. Each of these "voices of Britain" is heard by an average of about fifteen million cinemagoers each week.

GORDON HALES, age 21½, of average appearance but extremely intelligent, hard-working and reliable, urgently desires employment in any branch of film production, but preferably as a cutter's assistant. Will work for any wage, however small, all hours, anywhere. Practical experience limited mainly to 16mm. stock, but considerable theoretical knowledge. Capable of working for exceptionally long hours without sleep or food. Failing studio work would undertake work in renting or exhibiting line, in fact any work connected with the cinema. Write:—36 Constable Road, Ipswich.

BOOK REVIEWS

Movies for the Millions

By Gilbert Seldes (Batsford, 7s. 6d.)

Like the other arts movie has its different levels of appreciation. But the fact is already emerging that despite its youth movie has its different generations of appreciators. There are those (now elderly and venerable) who speak of the works of Méliès, viewed contemporaneously, with the hushed voices of those who have known a great brandy. There are those (less venerable but almost as elderly) who consider Biograph 1908 as a movie vintage never to be surpassed. Many there are—and they can still get about without crutches—who regard the coming of sound as a veritable scourge of phylloxera, destroying the vineyards and precluding further interest in the product thereof. And growing up in the midst of this world of didactic connoisseurs is a new generation of movie-lovers who have never tasted other than the mild-and-bitter of modern Hollywood.

Appreciators of all generations will find this book to their liking. Even the most narrow-minded of the connoisseurs will be unable to take offence at the skilful way in which their own pet periods are related to the wider development of the cinema; while the enquiring tyro will find in it an account of the causes and effects of many matters hitherto mysterious. Even the odd two million English people who have rejected the cinema and all its works would discover in it a piece of dispassionate good thinking conducive to a more benevolent attitude and a fresh trial.

A good understanding of any subject is rare, and the cinema is the last exception. Its violent economic instability, its spasmodic and disjointed relations with social reality, make it an almost impossible field for the comprehensive analyst. Academic treatises we have had in plenty; emotive responses have been measured, technical resources catalogued, aesthetic potentialities discussed. At the other end of the scale the unhinged utterances of sentimentalists, nymphomaniacs and moral obstructionists have raised a clamour out of all proportion to their importance. And in any film analysis a miss is as good as a mile for the simple reason that during the process of recording and synthesis the movies have moved on another stage. The film anatomist has to operate not on a corpse conveniently stuffed with red lead, but on a vital, living entity. He must carry the normal equipment of the social and economic observer; he must be something of a mental athlete, perpetually thinking ahead of what he sees; above all, he must, in a world of overnight values, be content to suspend judgment. Mr. Seldes has sifted the writings of the academes and the unhinged; he has observed the people of the screen with the care of an anthropologist, seasoning his observation with a practical spell of movie-making in Hollywood. And he has suspended judgment (at least so far as this book is concerned) for over twenty years. In addition he has collected 130 stills which in themselves form a unique and startling history of the movies. It is, therefore, hardly surprising that his book is the most penetrative study of the cinema published in recent years.

Mr. Seldes is good company not only because he is an authoritative and entertaining writer, but

also because he is tolerant and wise. The movies could scarcely ask for a more gracious critic. He hints at the dirt rather than spills it. It is true that in his more anecdotal moments he gives glimpses of the uglinesses behind. The story of the striker being deliberately tear-gassed for the benefit of a news cameraman (substantiated before a committee of the U.S. Senate) is an interesting reflection on the integrity of American newsreels. But the overall flavour of the book is one of excitement. Twenty years' service as a leading critic of commercial movies has failed to discourage Mr. Seldes. He looks forward to colour and stereoscopy and television as excitedly as he looks back to Méliès and Griffith. His excitement infects his readers, and therein lies his special charm.

STUART LEGG

Sound Recording for Films

By W. F. Elliott (Pitman, 10s. 6d.)

When the documentary people got their first experiences of sound they were inclined to regard the new element as a mixed blessing. The creative thrill which sound brought was, in those early days, to some extent countered by the immense difficulty of actually recording it. Limitations began to appear in a hitherto limitless world of shooting. Interior locations had to be chosen for their acoustic qualities. Cameras, once light and mobile, had to be encased in clumsy, home-made blimps or draped with blankets and padded with old bedroom-slippers. The microphone dominated the set, and the sounds of the working world had to be hushed for its benefit. Over all presided the recordist, enthroned in a remote Valhalla of meters, valves and mixing-panels. His word was law and he legislated through a telephone, icily. His calm pronouncements could drive a harassed director to blasphemy and an outraged cameraman to the nearest pub.

But all that has been changed. Sound-recordists have become friendly human beings. Some have examined the special aims and requirements of documentary and, finding interest therein, have themselves become specialised in catering for this branch of the business. One of these is W. F. Elliott, author of *Sound Recording for Films*.

Now in charge of the production recording department of British Acoustic Films, Mr. Elliott came to films from the world of radio. Much of his experience was gained in dubbing foreign languages on to films of American origin. This work took him to Spain, India and other countries. His book is accordingly written from the standpoint of the practitioner. Academic niceties he leaves to others; his focal point is the loudspeaker behind the screen, and he rightly regards sound-photography, production technique and re-recording methods as contributory stages towards good or bad results. In the course of this practical approach he performs useful service in resolving technical bugbears into their simplest terms, debunking the mystery-men and making concrete suggestions for improvements in working.

In a book of relatively high price we might reasonably ask for more—particularly for some

report of present experiments and their likely effect on future sound possibilities. An account, for example, of the recent American radio experiments in the use of narrow-angle microphones for the recording of orchestras would have been of deep interest to film musicians. But to insist would be ungrateful, for Mr. Elliott has done a good and necessary job of exposition, and though he primarily addresses apprentices to his own calling he will also be welcomed in that growing circle of people interested in the manner and method of film-making.

Cinemanía

By A. G. Bennett (Jarrolds, 18s.)

Mr. Arthur Gordon Bennett in *Cinemanía* has written a book of some 430 pages in which he gives us his personal opinions on every conceivable part of films: film production, film distribution, and film exhibition; film stars, film directors, film critics; films past, and films future. It is difficult to find in this very long book any subject connected with the cinema on which the author does not pronounce some opinion and, unfortunately, it is equally difficult to find any subject which he deals with thoroughly or competently.

Mr. Bennett's own explanation of his reason for writing this book will perhaps serve better than any comment of ours to give an idea of its character. "I am a novelist by profession. By instinct and inclination I am a showman." He would like to go into movie production because he tells us his career up to date seems to have demonstrated that he possesses, as a writer, certain qualifications that render his work "suitable for the filmic medium"; because he can claim "some knowledge of acting" and because he believes "the film to be the greatest art in the world."

Not being in a position to make films, Mr. Bennett has written this book. He ought to go into films.

Scruffy

By Claude Burbidge (Hurst and Blackett, 5s.)

Scruffy, an autobiography of the English dog film star who appeared in *Storm In a Teacup*, is something of a disappointment. For the first sixty-eight pages it is delightful and belongs to Scruffy, but after that he is pushed somewhat into the background.

I strongly suspect that Scruffy did not write this book himself but employed what turned out to be an unethical "ghost" who gives vent to personal criticisms, and poor Scruffy becomes little more than a peg on which to hang the author's likes and dislikes. Most of which are of no particular interest to the reader who expected a story of a dog.

Taken all in all, *Scruffy* is a very readable book and the mongrel is a likeable little cuss. But it could have been far more entertaining had it been more of a dog's-eye view and less of the author's plugging for several of Denham's other film stars.

G. F.

BOOK REVIEWS

Caustic Carols

By Rodney Hobson. Illustrated by Clarke Hutton (Chatto and Windus, 3s. 6d.)

If, like myself, you open *World Film News* at the Cockalorum page, you may feel that there is no need to buy the Collected Works of Hobson, when you can so easily re-enter into his joy by opening your well-thumbed bound volumes. But this would be a mistake. *Caustic Carols* is full of new stuff, and is worth the whole three and sixpence for the "Folk Song 1937" alone:

"O the old Rose and Crown has gone down-derry-down

Since they Londoners came down from town;
They say to each other, 'Oh darling, how quaint'

But it baint half as quaint as they be, that it baint."

Hobson derives his style from several genres. The music-hall song would appear to be one of his first loves; but also the works of W. S. Gilbert, are, one suspects, not unknown to him; and America's great contribution to the world of humour has been absorbed by his voracious inkpot.

He is, however, a law unto himself, and injects his own originality into every medium he chooses. Quite apart from his miraculous ingenuity in rhyming (Christmuth - bismuth, how far - en-quah, nudities - rude it is - either you like 'em or you don't) he can be kindly satirical or unkindly cynical at will. His remarks on Herbert Marshall fall joyously into the latter category; readers of *W.F.N.* will remember that

"He's always walking out into a blizzard if he can

Leaving the little woman to the other man.
Which, for the little woman, may be wizard,
But is it quite fair to the blizzard."

The illustrations by Clarke Hutton are poised nicely between the style of Thurber and Topolski; but when it comes to brass tacks its Hobson's energetic wit that counts.

A first class Xmas Gifte Booke for anyone—but especially film people, who may enliven the Yule festivities (yule rhymes with winter fule, of course) by recitations of "O, Mae is going West lads" or "Gertie the girl in the thrillers".

BASIL WRIGHT



From *Caustic Carols*, published by Chatto and Windus

ONCE upon a time, the theatre was the greatest show on earth. Shakespeare wrote for the common people and indeed the uncommon people. Governors, ecclesiastics and the rest frowned on the theatre. Sometimes it was persecuted, its players called vagabonds and put in prison. But the theatre was in touch with the common people. Plays were presented at inns, on village greens and commons. Every city had its players.

This happy state did not survive very long. The nobility took up the stage. Expensive theatres were built and a stage presentation became so costly as to be only within reach of a few. The theatre became divorced from the people. It only came in touch with them again, briefly, in the Victorian era with its travelling companies, its melodramas and its thrillers.

But the common people did not allow themselves to be deprived of entertainment. When the nobility stole the theatre away from them the circus took its place. Indeed, it is not unreasonable to say that the circus, which in Victorian times had its focus in Astley's, filled the place of the picture-palace of to-day. For the circus, like the film, has the common touch.

Willson Disher has written the history of Astley's, the great circus just south of London Bridge. He has caught the garishness and the simplicity of the time. His book is to be read not only by the student of the circus (who will find it admirably documented) but by anyone who has a feeling for the cheeriness of the people. His book has a real cockney flavour and its illustrations are splendid. The quotations are well chosen, apt, amusing and not too long.

It is said that people go to the pictures to escape reality. The films present us with a semblance of the real world but detached from the laws that govern society. Just a paradise of everything good and nothing bad, with a few gangsters to give excitement. Astley's was a dope for the people, too, but Astley's gave a real escape from life. Its performances had no relation with this earth, with their prancing horses, tumblers, clowns.

Listen to a contemporary description of Astley's most famous play:

"Andrew Ducrow's *Mazeppa and the Wild Horse, or The Child of the Desert*, was launched on a universally triumphant career of half a century on April 4th, 1831.

"In the courtyard of the Castle of Laurinski, as dawn is extinguishing the lights in the windows, Cassimir, a Tartar who serves as a page, climbs a buttress to kiss the hand of Olinska, the Castellan's daughter, who enters on a balcony. But when he pleads with her to fly to the deserts of Tartary, she answers,

ASTLEY'S

ROYAL AMPHITHEATRE OF ARTS.
Proprietor & Manager, Mr. WILLIAM BATTY, Bridge Road, Lambeth, Surrey
LICENSED BY THE LORD HIGH CHAMBERLAIN.

GRAND



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CONTINUED SUCCESS OF MAZEPPA!
FOR SIX NIGHTS LONGER!

In compliance to the demand for places to witness MAZEPPA, and on account of the Extensive Preparations for

From *The Greatest Show on Earth*, published by G. Bell & Sons

'How, with barbarians? sworn foes of my country—never, never!' Meanwhile, at the head of a splendid cavalcade of knights, Premislas, Count Palatine, comes to wed Olinska. In his honour a tournament is held: 'first a small sword combat, between two of the Pages—then a tilt of mounted and armed Knights, with spear and battle-axe, of whom Cassimir is one—then a sword combat on horseback, between Cassimir and his opponent—in both of these Cassimir is successful—then a broad-sword combat of four, in which Cassimir is also the victor.' That night the Tartar challenges Premislas to a duel and wounds him, but is secured by servants and sentenced by the Castellan to the punishment inflicted on rebel slaves:

'Lead the vile Tartar hence—strip him of the garb he has degraded—let not the arms of my house be sullied by adorning a traitor who raises his assassin arm against my friend, under the very roof that gives him shelter. Lead out the fiery, untamed steed—prepare strong hempen lashings round the villain's loins—let every beacon-fire on the mountain's top be lighted, and torches like a blazing forest cast their glare across the night.'

The cinema has much to learn from the circus and the music-hall.

Circuses and music-halls survive, while the theatre, divorced from the people, suffocates in the fat embrace of prosperous city men. Everyone who is interested in the flavour of the nineteenth century, everyone who is interested in popular entertainment, everyone who likes a readable, informative and finely illustrated book, should read Willson Disher's *Greatest Show on Earth*.

ARTHUR ELTON

"*The Greatest Show on Earth*" is published by Messrs. G. Bell & Sons, at 15/-.

TRAVEL INTEREST CARTOONS NEWS

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The Future's in the Air

Directed by ALEXANDER SHAW



A brilliant advertisement of both the excitements and the security of flying.
The Times.

There is infinite variety in the film, food for the mind of the technical and likewise for the lover of travel and beauty.

The Manchester Guardian.

Should be shown in schools throughout the country.

The Daily Sketch.

It has been brilliantly treated, for there is never a dull moment in the course of the film's rapid development.

To-Day's Cinema.

STRAND FILM COMPANY LTD., 37/39 OXFORD STREET, W.1

I SHOT Romance in LOW LIFE by Percy Smith



THESE remarks are respectfully offered to those who have expressed interest during the past three years in the filming of *Paramecium*, particularly those responsible for the following questions:

What *is* *Paramecium*?

What *are* *Paramecium*?

Is it true that you put fifty on the head of a pin?

Of what use is *Paramecium*?

Have you tried any of those things they use for breeding dogs?

What's wrong with your drains?

Haven't you got it yet?

Paramecium is a tiny slipper-shaped animal, barely visible to the eye which is found in smelly ponds and feeds on bacteria. To those who live in the atmosphere of microscopes and to whom size counts for nothing this tiny living speck is of immense interest; so it was decided to confer upon it the dignity and importance of a film-star. Specimens were obtained from various ponds and fed in jars of water containing putrefying wheat. As the joy of the inmates seemed directly proportional to the objectionableness of the stink produced this was patiently tolerated with a proviso that a prompt shooting of the specimens would be all to the good. Within a year every phase of its life history had been duly photographed with one exception—marriage—and that of course was what everyone was most anxious to see.

Paramecium breeds at an incredible rate, and appears to have the choice of two methods. The more usual mode of procedure is to grow a more and more pronounced waist, finally splitting by a muscular effort into two hefty youngsters. The other method is more complicated. A passing couple turn back and swim round each other with every appearance of mutual attraction. Then follows a kissing phase and finally they press their mouths together so firmly as to become inseparably united. Each individual next develops the attribute of both father and mother and a mutual exchange of compliments takes place; so whatever amusement is

derived from the business is on a fifty-fifty basis. It seems incredible that a creature with such capabilities for love-making could willingly descend to the sordid and prosaic alternative of pulling itself in half. Be this as it may the fact remains that a badly-wanted film was held up by a wretched creature that didn't want a good time and was obstinately determined not to have one. During a whole year frantic efforts were made to bring about the desired result. Experts were approached for advice and much of it being thoroughly contradictory, quite a lot of time was frittered away in experiments which led nowhere.

The first idea was that a culture weakened by continual in-breeding would marry to restore its lost vitality. We got a single *Paramecium* and bred from it for months until its progeny numbered millions of millions, and just as we were getting tired of this super-in-breeding we were told that it was all wrong and that we needed two such communities bred from different strains and finally mixed. So we got a *Paramecium* from Manchester and one from Camden Town and one from Epping Forest and one from a host of other places, from Universities, from dealers and from smelly ponds: and we in-bred them all *ad nauseam* and mixed them all *ad infinitum*. In the end we had an appalling assemblage of *Paramecium* in a room-full of glass-ware of sorts: but they didn't marry.

Then we were told to over-feed them. They merely bred the more and smelt the worse. Next we were told to starve them. The result was most gratifying as we lost three quarters of our guests in a week and so reduced the collection to more practicable dimensions. One might mention that the production of endless cultures was really the simplest part of the business. Each of the glasses had to be taken at frequent intervals into a bright light and its seething millions thoroughly inspected with a pocket lens, in case amongst the obstinate horde a single pair had so far forgotten themselves as to do what we wanted. Literature from many sources was roped in and

carefully studied. This marriage business—known in the text-books as conjugation—was frequently dealt with in such a way as to suggest that, with a mass of material such as we possessed, it would be an everyday occurrence. One felt that it was a far, far easier thing to describe the elusive event on paper than to produce it in the flesh.

Biological experts here and there who had actually witnessed the incident, and pond-life enthusiasts who hoped to were all on the look-out on our behalf, but a year went by and nothing came along.

HAVING vainly exploited all outside suggestions we decided to try out a few possibilities in the way of stimulants. Beef extract was fed to old cultures weakened by endless in-breeding, and these were promptly rejuvenated: but they only went on splitting. Someone suggested beer. The only noticeable result was a stimulation of what nature has given *Paramecium* in the way of kidneys.

Then we thought of the apple. This was not in any way suggested by the historic incident in the Garden of Eden, but by experiments with ferns.

On the basis of sex-appeal a fern might be considered distinctly cold and unresponsive, but it actually has a romantic phase in its history and at that period the male department can be worked up into quite a frenzy by the administration of a spot of apple-juice.

The effect of a piece of apple on *Paramecium* was instantaneous. They were attracted in millions and packed themselves on it in thick layers—but there was nothing sexy about it. They merely had a partiality for acid: and they continued to split and split.

At last! One evening came a message from the Imperial College. A student had spotted the long-sought event. A hectic rush, lights blazing and cameras buzzing far into the night: by the morning *Paramecium* was unconcernedly pretending that nothing of the sort had ever happened: but the film showed otherwise—and film never lies.

FILM GUIDE

Shorts

Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves (Puppets in Gaspar-colour).

DISTRIBUTION: A.B.F.D.

PRODUCTION: Slatinay and George Pal.

BOLTON: Gem	Dec. 30, 3 days
BRISTOL: Premier	Dec. 27, 3 days
Olympia	Dec. 30, 3 days
BIRMINGHAM: Broadway, Bristol St.	Dec. 19, 1 day
BURNHAM-ON-SEA: Ritz	Dec. 9, 3 days
CLEATOR MOOR: Hippodrome	Dec. 30, 3 days
FISHBURN: Alhambra	Dec. 8, 2 days
KIPPAX: Alhambra	Dec. 2, 3 days
KEITH: Playhouse	Dec. 20, 3 days
LONDON: Hippodrome, CharingXRd.	Dec. 5, 1 day
LAUNCESTON: Tower	Dec. 27, 3 days
LYNEMOUTH: Miners	Dec. 27, 3 days
LONG EATON: Empire	Dec. 30, 3 days
MIDSOMER NORTON: Palladium	Dec. 2, 3 days
NORTHAMPTON: Plaza	Dec. 27, 3 days
ROSS ON WYE: Kyrle	Dec. 30, 3 days
ST. ANNES: Empire	Dec. 19, 1 day
SACRISTON: Memorial	Dec. 19, 1 day
SHERBURN: Unity	Dec. 10, 2 days
STONE: Picture House	Dec. 27, 3 days
THATTO HEATH: Empire	Dec. 9, 3 days
WIGTON: Palace	Dec. 2, 3 days
WALTON ON THAMES: Capitol	Dec. 20, 6 days

Coal Face (Poetic treatment of coal mining).

DISTRIBUTION: A.B.F.D.

PRODUCTION: John Grierson for G.P.O. Film Unit.

SOUND PRODUCTION: Alberto Cavalcanti.

LAINDON: Picture House Dec. 23, 3 days

WE ALWAYS THOUGHT WE WERE GOOD

Once again Imperial heads the list of recordings for the month. 22 shorts are shown on these pages and we recorded 16 of them.

1 is a foreign recording,
5 were recorded by other
British studios, and
16 were recorded by Imperial.

Which shows that Imperial alone recorded 4 times as many shorts as all other British studios put together.

NOW WE KNOW WE ARE GOOD

Imperial Sound Studios
84 WARDOUR STREET . GER 1963
"where everyone goes for recording"

Colourful Cairo (Travelogue).

DISTRIBUTION: A.B.F.D.

ALEXANDRA: Strand	Dec. 23, 3 days
NEWSHAM: Plaza	Dec. 10, 2 days
WHITECHAPEL: Rivoli	Dec. 5, 1 day

Cover to Cover (Documentary of book production).

DISTRIBUTION: A.B.F.D.

PRODUCTION: Strand Films.

DIRECTION: Alexander Shaw.

COCKERMOUTH: Grand	Dec. 2, 3 days
CHORLTON-CUM-HARDY: Palais de Luxe	Dec. 9, 3 days
FISHBURN: Alhambra	Dec. 8, 2 days
HAVANT: Empire	Dec. 16, 3 days
KING'S LYNN: Majestic	Dec. 23, 3 days
LEEDS: Cosy	Dec. 9, 3 days
NEWSHAM: Plaza	Dec. 24, 2 days
NORTHENDEN: Coronation	Dec. 2, 3 days
OLDHAM: Kings	Dec. 27, 6 days
REDCAR: Central	Dec. 20, 3 days
SHERBURN HILL: Unity	Dec. 10, 2 days
ST. ANNES: Empire	Dec. 12, 4 days
SACRISTON: Memorial	Dec. 19, 1 day
WESTERHOPE: Picture House	Dec. 27, 3 days

Fire Fighters (Film of the London Fire Brigade).

DISTRIBUTION: Kinograph

DIRECTION: Peter Colin

LEEDS, HOLBECK: Queens	Dec. 23, 3 days
PORTSMOUTH: Victoria	Dec. 22, 3 days
TORQUAY: Electric	Dec. 20, 6 days

For All Eternity (A film of English cathedrals).

DISTRIBUTION: M.G.M.

PRODUCTION: Strand Films.

DIRECTION: Marion Grierson.

ALTRINCHAM: Hippodrome	Dec. 30, 3 days
CASTLE CARY: Magnet Talkie Thea.	Dec. 31, 2 days
CLYDACH, VALE: Cinema	Dec. 27, 3 days
CREWE: Palace	Dec. 6, 3 days
DUNBAR: Playhouse	Dec. 6, 2 days
HILLSBORO: Roscoe Picture Palace	Dec. 9, 3 days
PENICUIK: Empire	Dec. 3, 6 days
ST. IVES: Scala Theatre	Dec. 9, 3 days
SPARKBROOK: Waldorf	Dec. 2, 3 days
TORRINGTON: Cinema	Dec. 6, 2 days
WHALLEY: Co-op Hall	Dec. 6, 3 days

Forbidden Frontier (Political situation between Poland and Lithuania).

DISTRIBUTION: Kinograph.

PRODUCTION: World Window Productions.

SUPERVISION: Sir Philip Gibbs.

BRIDLINGTON: Lounge	Dec. 13, 3 days
FALKIRK: Regal	Dec. 27, 3 days
LONDON: World News, Praed Street	Dec. 9, 3 days
MANCHESTER: Scala, Withington	Dec. 6, 3 days
Tatler	Dec. 6, 6 days
REDDITCH: Gaumont	Dec. 2, 3 days
ROMILEY: Savoy	Dec. 16, 3 days

Heart of an Empire (Historical significance of St. James's Park and the surrounding buildings and memorials).

DISTRIBUTION: M.G.M.

PRODUCTION: Strand Films.

DIRECTION: Marion Grierson

FORRES: Picture House	Dec. 15, 1 day
SILSDEN: Picture Palace	Dec. 16, 3 days

Hollywood To-day (Behind the scenes in Film City).

DISTRIBUTION: Kinograph

PRODUCTION: Rupert Grayson

BATLEY: Empire	Dec. 2, 3 days
HALIFAX: Cosy	Dec. 30, 3 days
HUDDERSFIELD: Carlton	Dec. 9, 3 days
Lyceum	Dec. 9, 3 days
KEIGHLEY: Regent	Dec. 16, 3 days
LEEDS: Malvern	Dec. 27, 3 days
Regal, Crossgates	Dec. 16, 3 days
LONDON: Cameo, Charing X Road	Dec. 6, 3 days
Cameo, Victoria	Dec. 13, 3 days
Grand, Edgware Road	Dec. 13, 6 days
Palace, Wandsworth	Dec. 20, 3 days
MORECAMBE: Whitehall	Dec. 2, 3 days

Islands of the Bounty (Islands associated with the famous mutiny).

DISTRIBUTION: A.B.F.D.

AIRDALE: Empire	Dec. 2, 3 days
BOWNESS ON WINDERMERE: Royalty	Dec. 6, 3 days
BEAUMARIS: Regal	Dec. 24, 2 days
CLEATOR MOOR: Hippodrome	Dec. 30, 3 days
DALTON IN FURNESS: Co-op.	Dec. 3, 2 days
DURHAM: Regal	Dec. 6, 3 days
ESHWINNING: Pavilion	Dec. 30, 3 days
GRANGEVILLA: Pavilion	Dec. 9, 3 days
HULL: Playhouse	Dec. 2, 3 days
HAVANT: Empire	Dec. 16, 3 days
HULL: West Park	Dec. 23, 3 days
MIDDLEWICH: Alhambra	Dec. 16, 3 days
NEWSHAM: Plaza	Dec. 10, 2 days
NEWMARKET: Kingsway	Dec. 16, 3 days
ST. ANNES: Empire	Dec. 19, 1 day
SANDBACH: Palace	Dec. 20, 3 days
USHAW MOOR: Empire	Dec. 27, 3 days
WINSFORD: Magnet	Dec. 13, 3 days

Key to Scotland (Edinburgh documentary).

DISTRIBUTION: Kinograph

DIRECTION: Marion Grierson

BATH: News Theatre	Dec. 2, 3 days
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Men Against the Sea (Documentary of North Sea trawling).

DISTRIBUTION: Kinograph

DIRECTION: Vernon Sewell

BECKENHAM: Regal	Dec. 27, 6 days
FELIXSTOWE: Playhouse	Dec. 30, 3 days
MAIDENHEAD: Ritz	Dec. 9, 3 days
PRESTON: Rialto	Dec. 8, 4 days
WINDSOR: Regal	Dec. 19, 4 days

Night Mail (Documentary of the northward trip of the postal special).

DISTRIBUTION: A.B.F.D.

PRODUCTION: Basil Wright, Harry Watt

FREE STATE: Ballyhaunis Cinema	Dec. 5, 4 days
Ballaghaderreen Cinema	Dec. 5, 4 days
Elphin Cinema	Dec. 5, 4 days
Strokestown Cinema	Dec. 5, 4 days
GILESGATE: Crescent	Dec. 10, 3 days
HENDON: Classic	Dec. 2, 3 days
KELTY: Picture House	Dec. 25, 1 days
LYNEMOUTH: Miners	Dec. 14, 3 days
SCOTSWOOD: Regent	Dec. 2, 3 days

Nomad in the North (Scenic film of Norway).

DISTRIBUTION: Kinograph

PRODUCTION & DIRECTION: C. E. Hodges

BARNESLEY: Ritz	Dec. 13, 6 days
BROMLEY: Palais de Luxe	Dec. 20, 6 days
CHESTER: Music Hall	Dec. 6, 6 days
CIRENCESTER: Picture House	Dec. 16, 3 days
LONDON: Gaumont, Finchley	Dec. 13, 6 days
News Theatre, Victoria	Dec. 2, 3 days
Regent, Stamford Hill	Dec. 13, 7 days
MANSFIELD: Rock Picture House	Dec. 23, 3 days
NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE: Olympia	Dec. 13, 3 days
NEWPORT, I.O.W.: Odeon	Dec. 2, 3 days
STOCKPORT: Plaza	Dec. 13, 6 days

Plane Sailing (The ins and outs of gliding).

DISTRIBUTION: Kinograph

DIRECTION: Bosworth Goldman

BARROW: Regal	Dec. 27, 6 days
BASINGSTOKE: Plaza	Dec. 23, 3 days
BRISTOL: Hippodrome, Bedminster	Dec. 20, 6 days
CAMBRIDGE: Victoria	Dec. 20, 6 days
DEWSBURY: Regal	Dec. 13, 6 days
EDINBURGH: Monseigneur	Dec. 13, 3 days
HUDDERSFIELD: Carlton	Dec. 16, 3 days
HULL: Savoy	Dec. 30, 3 days
ILFRACOMBE: Scala	Dec. 6, 3 days
LEEDS: Hillcrest	Dec. 2, 3 days
LONDON: Pavilion, Hackney	Dec. 13, 6 days
World News, Praed Street	Dec. 6, 3 days
MANCHESTER: Scala, Withington	Dec. 13, 3 days

Shorts (contd.)

Rooftops of London (Documentary).

DISTRIBUTION: M.G.M.

PRODUCTION: Strand Films

DIRECTION: Paul Rotha

BIRMINGHAM: New Regent	Dec. 30, 3 days
LIMAVADY: Roe Cinema	Dec. 15, 2 days
LONDON: Monseigneur News Theatre, Piccadilly	Dec. 20, 3 days
NOTTINGHAM: Ilkeston Road Picture Palace	Dec. 30, 3 days
Tinsley: Tinsley Palace	Dec. 2, 3 days
THERNSCOPE: Cinema	Dec. 6, 3 days
UPPER THORPE: Oxford Palace	Dec. 17, 2 days
	Dec. 16, 3 days

Secrets of the Stars (Spotlight on British stages and studios).

DISTRIBUTION: Kinograph

PRODUCTION: Argyle British Productions Ltd.

BIRMINGHAM: Picture Hse., Harbourn	Dec. 30, 3 days
BRADFORD: Grange	Dec. 2, 3 days
BRIDGEWATER: Palace	Dec. 27, 3 days
CHEPSTOW: Palace	Dec. 20, 3 days
CHIPPENHAM: Gaumont	Dec. 23, 3 days
CINDERFORD: Palace	Dec. 30, 3 days
DORCHESTER: Palace	Dec. 23, 3 days
DUDLEY: Regent	Dec. 23, 7 days
FROME: Palace	Dec. 6, 6 days
FALKIRK: Pavilion	Dec. 9, 3 days
GAINSBOROUGH: Grand	Dec. 2, 3 days
GRIMSBY: Savoy	Dec. 20, 6 days
HULL: Dorchester	Dec. 13, 6 days
INFRACOMBE: Scala	Dec. 16, 3 days
KIRKCALDY: Rialto	Dec. 9, 3 days
LEEDS: Headingley Picture House	Dec. 9, 3 days
LIVERPOOL: Bedford Magnet	Dec. 16, 3 days
LONDON: Empire, Highgate	Dec. 26, 4 days
Globe, Acton	Dec. 13, 7 days
Marlborough, Holloway	Dec. 13, 7 days
Palace, Putney	Dec. 20, 7 days
Queens, Rushey Green	Dec. 20, 7 days
Picture House, Dalston	Dec. 13, 7 days
Tower, Peckham	Dec. 20, 7 days
LYDNEY: Picture House	Dec. 30, 3 days
MANCHESTER: Scala, Withington	Dec. 30, 3 days
Tatler	Dec. 6, 6 days
MIDDLESBROUGH: Pavilion	Dec. 30, 3 days
MONMOUTH: Picture House	Dec. 2, 3 days
MOTHERWELL: Pavilion	Dec. 16, 3 days
NORTHAMPTON: Exchange	Dec. 6, 3 days
NORTH SHIELDS: Prince's	Dec. 13, 6 days
SALTAIRE: Picture House	Dec. 23, 3 days
SOUTHEND-ON-SEA: Kursaal	Dec. 30, 3 days
WILLENHALL: Picture House	Dec. 23, 3 days

Snow Water (Water power in the Swiss mountains).

DISTRIBUTION: Kinograph

DIRECTION: H. Dreyer

CHESTERFIELD: Picture House	Dec. 27, 6 days
CIRENCESTER: Picture House	Dec. 20, 3 days
CREWE: Odeon	Dec. 20, 6 days
EDINBURGH: Monseigneur	Dec. 20, 3 days
GOOLE: Cinema Palace	Dec. 13, 3 days
HULL: Criterion	Dec. 20, 6 days
LONDON: Coronet, Notting Hill Gate	Dec. 16, 3 days
World News, Praed Street	Dec. 13, 3 days
PENGE: King's Hall	Dec. 23, 3 days
SUTTON COLDFIELD: Odeon	Dec. 13, 6 days

Statue Parade (Historical treatment of London statues).

DISTRIBUTION: M.G.M.

PRODUCTION: Strand Films

DIRECTION: Paul Burnford and Ralph Keene

BIRMINGHAM: Highgate Picture Thea.	Dec. 30, 3 days
BEAUMARIS: Cinema	Dec. 8, 2 days
ECCLESAL: Greystones	Dec. 8, 2 days
GREEN LANES: Picture House	Dec. 30, 3 days
HULL: Monica	Dec. 30, 3 days
TENBY: Royal Playhouse	Dec. 12, 3 days
TRURO: Plaza	Dec. 20, 3 days
TINSLEY: Tinsley Palace	Dec. 13, 3 days
WATTON: Regal Cinema	Dec. 13, 3 days
WARD END, BIRMINGHAM: Capitol	Dec. 16, 3 days

They Shall Not Pass (Documentary of the Civil War in Spain; English commentary).

DISTRIBUTION: International Sound Films.

PRODUCTION: Ministry of Public Instruction in Madrid

DUNDEE: Gray's	Dec. 6, 3 days
Astoria	Dec. 6, 3 days
GLASGOW: Magnet	Dec. 16, 3 days
Tonic	Dec. 13, 3 days
GREENOCK: Central	Dec. 20, 3 days
IRVINE: Regal	Dec. 2, 3 days
KYLSYTH: Pavilion	Dec. 8, 1 day
MOTHERWELL: Cinema House	Dec. 2, 3 days
RENTON: Roxy	Dec. 10, 2 days
SHETTLESTON: State	Dec. 1, 1 day

Way to the Sea (Documentary of the roads and railways from London to the coast).

DISTRIBUTION: A.B.F.D.

PRODUCTION: Strand Films

DIRECTION: J. B. Holmes

ASHTON-UNDER-LYNE: Empire	Dec. 20, 3 days
HUDDERSFIELD: Waterloo	Dec. 20, 3 days
LEEDS: Cosy	Dec. 27, 3 days
MIDDLEWICH: Alhambra	Dec. 27, 3 days
NORTHAMPTON: Tivoli	Dec. 27, 3 days
ROTHWELL: Palace	Dec. 16, 3 days
SANDBACH: Palace	Dec. 30, 3 days
WINSFORD: Magnet	Dec. 23, 3 days

EDUCATIONAL FILM PROGRAMMES

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Charing Cross Road.

On Saturday, December 4th, 12 to 1 p.m.

Voyage of Discovery.

Climatic Regions of the Empire.

The Magic North.

Igloo.

Prairie Winter.

Further details from G.B. Instructional
Films Bureau, Film House, Wardour
Street, W.1.

Wheel and Woe (The evolution of the motor car).

DISTRIBUTION: Kinograph

PRODUCTION: Liberty

DIRECTION: W. G. Duncalf

BARNSTAPLE: Gaumont	Dec. 6, 3 days
BATH: News Theatre	Dec. 6, 3 days
BELLHILL: Picture House	Dec. 30, 3 days
BURSLER: Coliseum	Dec. 16, 3 days
CHEPSTOW: Palace	Dec. 16, 3 days
CINDERFORD: Palace	Dec. 6, 3 days
COVENTRY: Gaumont	Dec. 19, 7 days
DERBY: Gaumont	Dec. 20, 6 days
ERITH: Ritz	Dec. 2, 3 days
GLASGOW: Bank Cinema, Clydebanks	Dec. 30, 3 days
GLOSSOP: Empire	Dec. 20, 3 days
GRIMSBY: Savoy	Dec. 27, 6 days
GUERNSEY: Lyric	Dec. 9, 3 days
HORSHAM: Capitol	Dec. 2, 3 days
HULL: Central	Dec. 20, 6 days
ILFRACOMBE: Scala	Dec. 9, 3 days
KETTERING: Electric Pavilion	Dec. 27, 6 days
LANCASTER: Odeon	Dec. 27, 6 days
LEEDS: Hillcrest	Dec. 9, 3 days
LONDON: Broadway Pavilion, Ealing	Dec. 13, 7 days
Hippodrome, Camden Tn	Dec. 20, 7 days
King's Cross Cinema	Dec. 13, 7 days
Monseigneur, Charing X	Dec. 20, 3 days
Monseigneur, Strand	Dec. 13, 3 days
Palladium, Palmers Green	Dec. 13, 6 days
Picture House, Old Kent Rd	Dec. 20, 7 days
Rivoli, Whitechapel	Dec. 13, 7 days
Sphere, Tott. Court Rd.	Dec. 20, 3 days
MAIDENHEAD: Ritz	Dec. 2, 3 days
MALVERN: Malvern Theatre	Dec. 2, 3 days
MANCHESTER: Scala, Withington	Dec. 27, 3 days
Tatler	Dec. 20, 6 days
MANSFIELD: Empire	Dec. 13, 6 days
NORTHAMPTON: Exchange	Dec. 27, 6 days
OLDHAM: Odeon	Dec. 13, 6 days
REDDITCH: Gaumont	Dec. 27, 6 days

ST. AUSTELL: Odeon
SCARBOROUGH: Capitol
SOUTHEND-ON-SEA: Kursaal
SUTTON: Surrey County
WAKEFIELD: Empire

Dec. 30, 3 days
Dec. 9, 3 days
Dec. 13, 3 days
Dec. 20, 6 days
Dec. 27, 6 days

Foreign Films

Un Carnet de Bal (Winner of the Mussolini Cup—French).

DIRECTION: Julien Duvivier

STARRING: Françoise Rosay
Harry Baur
Pierre Blanchard
Fernandel
Robert Lynen

LONDON: Studio One Dec. 3, indefinitely

The New Gulliver (Russian puppet film).

DISTRIBUTION: Soyokino

DIRECTION: A. Ptushko

LONDON: Forum Dec. 1, indefinitely

Squadron Bianco (Italian).

PRODUCTION: Roma Films

DIRECTION: Augusto Genina

STARRING: Fosco Gianchetti
Anthony Ceuta
Fulvia Lanzi

LONDON: Academy Dec. 1, indefinitely

Tales from the Vienna Woods (Austrian).

DIRECTION: George Jacoby

STARRING: Wolf Albach-Retty
Leo Slizak
Magda Schneider

LONDON: Studio One Dec. 1, 2 days

Versprich Mir Nichts (German).

DIRECTOR: Wolfgang Liebeneiner

STARRING: Luise Ullrich
Victor de Kowa
Heinrich George

LONDON: Berkeley Dec. 1, indefinitely

Underworld (From Maxim Gorki's novel—French).

DIRECTION: Jean Renoir

STARRING: Jean Gabin
Louis Jouvet
Suzy Prim

LONDON: Curzon Dec. 1, indefinitely

Westfront 1918 (German).

DIRECTOR: G. W. Pabst

LONDON: Ladies Taylor's Hall,
Gt. Garden Street, E.1

Dec. 4, 1 day

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Ciné-Kodak Film is Reversal Film. In the course of processing, the negative image, formed from the larger grains of silver salt, is bleached out, leaving only the minute unexposed grains to form the positive image; i.e., Cine-Kodak Film gives you a **finer-grained, clearer** screen image than non-reversal films of similar speed can possibly do.

With "Kodachrome" there is actually no grain at all in the processed film, the final image consisting only of pure transparent dyes.

Then again, those deviations from the theoretically correct exposure that are bound to occur from time to time are **automatically compensated for** during the processing of black-and-white Ciné-Kodak Film by a photo-electric cell device exclusive to Kodak. A substantial margin of error is thus permitted, and screen results are practically constant in brightness, quality and detail.

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Ciné-Kodak Super Sensitive Panchromatic Film (16 mm.). The film of lightning speed. Indispensable for artificial light work, and in weak daylight.

Ciné-Kodak Eight Panchromatic Film (8 mm. after processing). A superfine grained film, made specially for the Ciné-Kodak Eight. Gives full-sized screen pictures of sparkling quality.

"Kodachrome" Film (16 mm.). A full colour film without grain, "screen" or pattern of any kind. Requires no filters on camera or projector. Fast as Ciné-Kodak Panchromatic Film. Special Type "A" is available for use with "Photoflood" lighting.

"Kodachrome" Eight Film (8 mm. after processing). This year, colour movies are brought within reach of Ciné-Kodak Eight users. "Kodachrome" Eight has the same emulsion as the 16 mm. stock described above, but is specially perforated for the Ciné-Kodak Eight. Special "Kodachrome" Eight Type "A" is available for use with "Photoflood" lighting.

16 mm. Sound Recording Film. Perforated on one edge only. The following emulsions are available for sound recording with variable width and variable density systems.

Reversal Panchromatic Sound Recording.

"Kodachrome" Sound Recording.

"Kodachrome" Type "A" Sound Recording.

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FILM SOCIETIES AND CLUBS

EAST LONDON FILM SOCIETY: After a successful season of 16 mm. film shows at Toynbee Hall last year, it is proposed to form an East London Film Society, with the idea of giving monthly shows on Sunday afternoons in a local cinema.

Cost of membership will be 10s. for the season. Further information from the Hon. Secretary of the Film Group, Toynbee Hall, Commercial Street, London, E.1.

OXFORD FILM SOCIETY: Hon. Secretary, E. F. Bowtell, Esq., 105 Victoria Road, Oxford.

At the meeting on Sunday, November 14th, the programme was headed by Duvivier's *The Golem*. Other films included Benchley's *How to Be a Detective*, Starevitch's *Butterfly Queen* and Max Brand's *Nachtliche Ruheströmung*. *Turksib*, *Marie Galante* and *Dawn* are scheduled for future presentation.

THE FEDERATION OF CINEMATOGRAPH SOCIETIES: Chairman, Harry Walden, A.R.P.S. Hon. Secretary, F. P. Barnitt, Esq., Filmers, Forest Road, Tunbridge Wells, Kent.

After having been formally inaugurated early this year, the Federation is well on its way to being firmly established.

The main purpose has been to get cine societies together in association with the Royal Photographic Society, to secure those benefits which come from working together. The preliminary work has mainly consisted of the preparation of a panel of judges and a panel of lecturers. The latter covers a wide field of subjects and is already being made good use of. An inter-club competition is in course of arrangement for the new year, for which Mr. Barnitt has promised a cup.

The following societies have become members of the Federation: Beckenham C.S., Birmingham F.S. (Cine Section), Finchley A.C.S., Grimsby P.S. (Cine Section), Ilford A.C.S., Kodak Works P.S. (Cine Section), Leatherhead Cine Circle, London A.F.C., Manchester F.S., Montagu Pictures, South London C.S., West Essex F.S., Whitehall C.S., Wimbledon C.C., Rayners Lance Camera Club, Cambridge and District P.C. (Cine Group), West Kent Cine Club, Sonodisc Film Productions, Heston C.C., Kingston C.C., and Wisbech P.S. (Cine Section). In addition the Association of Cine Technicians and the Guild of Projectionists, which are affiliated to the R.P.S., will as from January 1st be linked through the Cine Federation instead of through the older part of the Photographic Alliance organisation.

COLCHESTER FILM SOCIETY: Hon. Secretary, Lewis Halsey, 273 Ipswich Road, Colchester.

The opening performance of the Colchester Film Society's first season took place on Thursday, October 28th, when *The White Hell of Pitz Palu*, directed by G. W. Pabst and Arnold Fanck, was shown. The film was introduced by Paul Capon, who was responsible for the editing of *Little Friend*, *Roadhouse* and *The Clairvoyant*, and who later directed *Nerve Strain* and *Radio Lover*.

WOLVERHAMPTON FILM SOCIETY: Hon. Membership Secretary, Miss D. Roston, 60 Great Brickkiln Street. Hon. Programme Secretary, E. L. Packer, Esq., 58 Himley Crescent, Wolverhampton.

Owing to decrease in membership attributable to several causes, only four meetings will be held for subscription of 10s. 6d. At the first meeting in October members saw *So Ended a Great Love*, *How to Sleep* (Benchley), *Plane Sailing*, and *Black Journey*. November meeting: *Lac-aux-Dames*, *Tawny Owl*, *Gentlemen in Top Hats*, and *How to Train a Dog*. The G.P.O. Film Unit gave a display to the Society on November 15th.

THE GUILD OF CATHOLIC TEACHERS' FILM SOCIETY: Hon. Secretary, Terence Grant, Esq., The Catholic Institute, Newton Place, Charing Cross, Glasgow.

At the meeting on November 11th there was a discussion on "Censorship" when the methods of film classification employed by "Choirs," "The American Decency League" and "The British Film Institute" were examined. It was suggested that the Guild should make use of the Decency League literature and send out periodical lists of approved films to the schools. This suggestion is receiving consideration.

On November 18th and 19th there was a show of the Society's films in St. Aloysius Hall, Glasgow. There will also be exhibitions in the various provincial centres in the near future.

The Rev. Father Valentine of the Catholic Film Society will give a lecture to the Guild in January, on "The Film in Education."

NEW AMATEUR COMPETITION

The National Trust whose aim is the preservation of the natural beauty of the countryside, is sponsoring a competition for silent 16 mm. films of Trust properties. The films should not run less than 10 minutes and coloured films are eligible to compete.

Preference will be given films dealing with several, rather than one, property. But no two prizes in respect of films of the same property or group of properties will be awarded. The Trust reserves copyright of any prize-winning exhibit.

Intending competitors should communicate with: The Competition Secretary, The National Trust, 7 Buckingham Palace Gardens, London, S.W.1.

The Prizes will be: First, twenty pounds; second, fifteen pounds; third, five pounds.

The closing date is July 1st, 1938.

Prize winning films will be used in connection with lectures, etc., to further the work of the Trust. They will be titled as a prize winning film, and will bear the name of the competitor.

If amateurs will communicate with the National Trust office they will be sent a list of the different properties, and a leaflet regarding the work of the trust. Information about the kinds of films needed will appear in the next issue of *World Film News*.

THE CATHOLIC FILM SOCIETY: Hon. Secretary, Rev. Ferdinand Valentine, O.P., 36 Great Smith Street, London S.W.1.

The first Town Hall display this season was at Lewisham Town Hall on November 23rd, when "The Holy Mass" was screened and the new sound version of the Society's social film, *Great Awakening*. The next Town Hall display is at Finsbury, on Monday, January 17th.

The next monthly display is at Millicent Fawcett Hall on Wednesday, December 1st, when the Grail film will be shown and a special lecture on the movement given.

Spoken commentaries have been added to the Society's principal films and records on religious subjects are also ready. There are facilities at 36 Gt. Smith Street for recording speeches or choirs; full particulars on application.

As heretofore, the Society arranges film displays of Catholic interest in Convents, Schools and Parish Halls, providing all the necessary apparatus and expert operators. A commentary can be had with any C. F. S. film, if desired.

WEST ESSEX FILM SOCIETY: Hon. Secretary L. G. Watson, Esq., 10 Meadway, Buckhurst Hill.

The Fourth Annual General Meeting was held on October 31st, and officers were elected for the ensuing year.

During the past year some members of the Society made a film for the Mortlock Sterilized Milk Supply Co., Ltd., of Manor Park. The Film Unit formed (which includes among its operations the filming of carnivals, fetes, etc.) made a film for the Eton Manor Club of events in their Coronation Party. The Society film, *Hiking*, was commenced (and is well in hand) and several members began private films, some of which have been completed and the others are in course of production. These achievements have only been possible by dint of the work put in by all members in their respective capacities, and the Society now embarks on a new year, the aim of all members being to continue and increase the progress made in past years.

MANCHESTER AND SALFORD FILM SOCIETY: Hon. Secretary, R. Cordwell, Esq., 13 Milwain Drive, Heaton Chapel, Stockport.

The Society is making excellent progress, present membership being 510, and increasing daily. Indications are that the numbers will be nearly 1,000 before the close of the season.

Recent arrangements include joint membership with the Manchester and District Film Institute Society, for the additional payment of 1s., making a total subscription of 11s.

The following films have been shown this season: September 26th: *Fredlös*, *Graf von Carabes*, *The Great Train Robbery* and *Madrid To-Day*; October 24th: *Unfinished Symphony*, *Millions of Us*, *Changes in the Franchise*, *Le Vieux Château*; November 21st: *Merlusse*, *To-Day We Live*, *The World To-Day*, *Galalee*. On December 19th the programme includes *We*

(Continued over the page.)

from *Kronstadt*, *The Basque Children*, *Den Haag* and *Colour Abstracts*. Further shows on January 23rd, February 20th, March 20th, April 17th. *W.F.N.* is on sale at all events arranged.

FILM SOCIETY OF GLASGOW: Hon. Secretary, D. Paterson Walker, Esq., 129 St. Vincent Street, Glasgow, C.2.

Films shown on November 7th were Rotha's *Statue Parade*, Len Lye's *Trade Tattoo*, Cavalcanti's *The Saving of Bill Blewitt*, *The Grey Seal*, *Glasgow and the Coast* in 1910, and *Der Herrscher* with Emil Jannings.

As the renting firm distributing *Fredlos* and *Janosik* have gone into bankruptcy, the original dates planned for the showing of these films have had to be altered. Both will be re-booked at the earliest available moment.

IPSWICH FILM SOCIETY: Hon. Secretary, Mary Banks, 463 Woodbridge Road, Ipswich. Programme Secretary, Gordon Hales, Esq., 36 Constable Road, Ipswich.

The Society held the first performance of its fourth season on Sunday, October 3rd, when Rotha's *Contact*, *Carmen*, *Rain*, and the Swedish film *En Natt* were presented. On October 26th the programme included *Gentlemen in Top Hats* and *Gentlemen in Crowns* and the Irish film *The Dawn*. On November 19th Alberto Cavalcanti lectured on *The Documentary Film*. Subsequent activities include the presentation of Fritz Lang's *M* in its entirety on December 12th, together with a film produced by Pathé-Frères about 1909, *Cinderella and the Glass Slipper*.

BLACKHEATH FILM CLUB: Hon. Secretary, J. Gibson, Esq., 6 St. German's Place, London, S.E.3.

The Gala Week from October 11th to 16th showed an all-round improvement in the Club's as well as in members' films, and from all accounts the programme was a success, although the attendances were not up to last year's mark. Documentary films proved more popular than the Club's *He was Her Man*.

Many London Societies sent representatives, and the B.F.C. thanks them for their support and hopes that return visits may be arranged.

A story competition has been arranged to find material for the next production, members judging by vote at a special meeting held for the purpose. Projection meetings are fixed for Dec. 1st, Jan. 5th, Feb. 2nd, March 2nd, April 6th, May 4th, and anyone interested will be welcomed at the studios, 2 Banchory Road, Blackheath, S.E.3.

YOUR FIRST FILM STORY

Here are some good production ideas for amateur movie makers, though W.F.N. would like to receive suggestions for films which have a wider range of subject and will appeal to a wider audience than those suggested here

To the amateur who is contemplating the production of his first "photoplay," I would offer the following advice:

Choose a suitable plot or incident—something which will run to no more than about 150 or 200 feet.

Have only three or four characters in the story.

Let as much as possible of the action take place out of doors.

Film as much as you can on the same day.

Introduce plenty of close-ups.

Use only one camera, only one kind of film; and use an exposure meter throughout.

To deal first with the choice of a plot. Bear in mind that a realistic effect is obtained more easily when people are acting as themselves, in familiar surroundings, than when they are pretending to be members of a totally different class of society, engaged in romantic or nefarious pursuits which they would seldom attempt in real life. The dapper bank clerk is not transformed into a convincing "crook" merely by wearing a thick muffler and a cap pulled over his eyes; nor are we deceived when the typist or salesgirl reclines languorously on a divan skilfully manipulating a long cigarette holder, in the rôle of vamp.

How much simpler it is to select an amusing incident which might take place in the garden, and elaborate it until a few members of the family can perform it as a complete little story; or to take two or three friends into the country, and show what happens when they discover a lonely hut, or a "dead" body, or a mysterious letter, or a lost child. Practical jokes with surprise endings, faked accidents, unexpected meetings, thrilling finishes to races or matches—all these give scope for the production of delightful little cameos of life which will be convincing by reason of their very naturalness, particularly if the scenario is carefully prepared, so that the most thrilling incident provides a climax at the end of

the film. Indeed, the story with the surprise ending is eminently suitable for a short film. Then, again, most people are in touch with some local organisation. There are gymnasiums, sports clubs, boy scout troops, and so on, in every town, and members of these are easily persuaded to act a story before the camera. The school teacher, too, can get his boys to do anything for him, though, if a child film is contemplated, small nephews and nieces make wonderful natural actors once they have been trained to avoid looking at the camera.

A suitable story, then, having been put into scenario form, the next thing is to decide upon the cast, bearing in mind that it is advisable to keep it small. The reason for this is that an audience is confused by too many characters, and has not time to sort them out before the film is over.

When all is ready for filming, it is a good plan to complete as much of the story as possible on one bright, sunny day. If this is done, the exposures are more likely to be even throughout, the characters are all available, and willing to enter into the spirit of the action, and there is less likelihood of differences in their dress or appearance being noticed.

Finally, to put your story "over" in the best possible way, so that the point is not lost upon your audience, forget all about titles at first. Make the story tell itself, as clearly as possible, in pictures alone. Join up the film in its proper order. View it, cut it, view it again; alter it, improve the order of the shots, cross-cut, until you are finally satisfied that the story is as clear as it can be with the film at your disposal. You may then find that you do not need any subtitles at all, in which case you have done an excellent piece of work.

You will then have something interesting and individual to inflict on visitors to your home, and to rouse the envy of your neighbour with his Super-Special Camera De Luxe.

G. Wain.

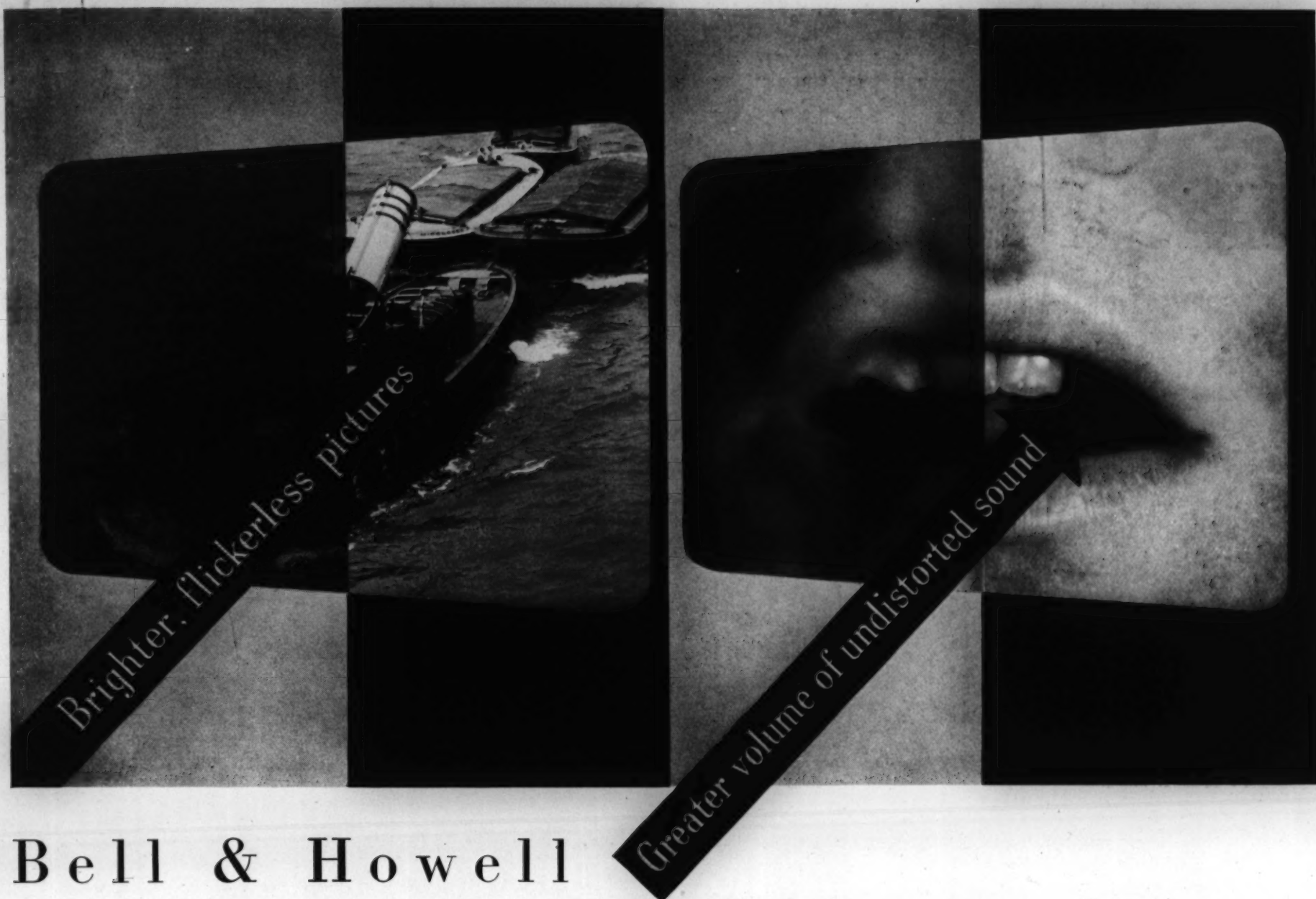
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reference to an earlier sequence or the retention of one picture is often necessary.

Model 138F is contained in a single case, which also accommodates 1,600 feet reel of film. In use the combined projector and amplifier unit is removed from the case, and the cover serves as baffle for self-contained loud speaker. New sound-head for the reproducer, incorporating a rotating sound drum, flywheel and a floating idler. Voltages on exciter lamp and photocell balance automatically as volume control is changed. Amplifier tubes of new metal type. Among special features worthy of note are reverse and "still" picture device, motor rewind and reel arm which can be attached quickly with single screw. The projector finish is grey damaskene, while the carrying case is covered grey fabricoid to match. Model 138F, with 750 watt lamp, two film speeds (for either sound or silent film) Price £138.

Model 138J. Has the same features but is a two-case model. One case contains the projector which is operated without removing, and the other case contains the speaker. £146.

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